

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Che Guevara speaks on social aims of Rebel Army**

— PAGES 8-11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 63/NO. 11 MARCH 22, 1999

## Jeddo miners reject contract, stay on strike

BY CANDACE WAGNER  
AND PETE SEIDMAN

EBERVALE, Pennsylvania — Striking members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Locals 803 and 1531 voted March 4 to reject a proposed contract from the Jeddo Coal Co., just outside of Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Sixty miners voted against the contract and two in favor. The strike is approaching its first anniversary. Miners walked out March 26, 1998.

"Everything was bad in that contract," Bill DeRienzo, a strike captain, told *Militant* reporters visiting the picket line on March 8.

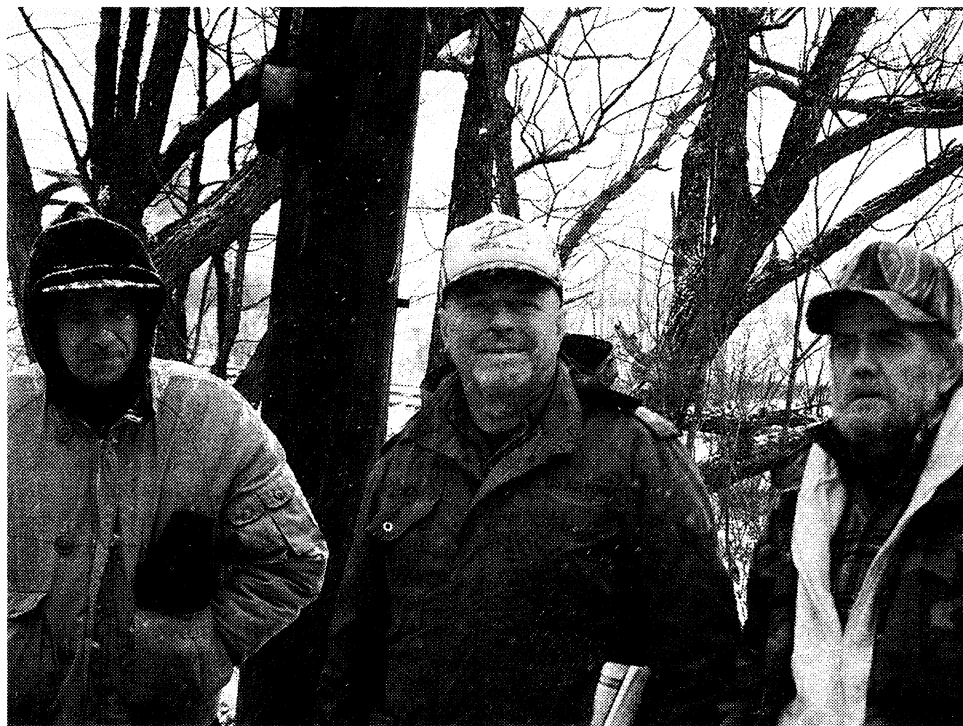
Most important to DeRienzo and fellow striker Richard P. Patskan, Sr., were the proposed changes in seniority. "The company imposed its own seniority list, including employees from other Pagnotti mines," said DeRienzo. The Jeddo mine is owned by the Pagnotti family.

The two strikers pointed out the company aims to pick and choose which miners are laid off and recalled. The company also seeks to extend to a week the amount of time that workers can be laid off out of seniority.

"The HMO they offered? You'd have to be attacked by a gorilla to be covered by it," DeRienzo added, referring to the proposed health plan.

Another reason miners rejected the contract proposal was its failure to offer parity in vacation pay and personal days off with the three other UMWA-organized anthracite mines. In 1994, the mine operators refused to sign a common contract covering all union workers in the industry as had been the case previously. The three companies besides Jeddo signed separate, but similar contracts. Pagnotti refused, demanding drastic concessions. Jeddo imposed its "last, best" offer in December, 1997. That imposed contract is what provoked the strike a few months later.

Striker Bob Lynch emphasized the impor-



Militant/Nancy Cole

**After nearly a year on strike, members of the UMWA at Jeddo Coal Co. voted 60-2 to reject inadequate offer and continue their fight. Above, workers picket the mine in January.**

tance of fighting for parity in a phone interview with the *Militant*. "This is a rough industry," he said. "These new coal barons here haven't changed their mentality. Once they smell blood they're coming after you. One opportunity they'd have is if one of the companies fell behind the benchmark on wages, vacations, or personal days."

In a phone interview, Joe Lupcho, a shovel operator and Local 803 president, also blasted the contract. "In one paragraph they gave you something and in the next they took it back," he said. "You had to be a lawyer to understand it. They wanted a disciplinary program where if you weren't a

saint, you'd get fired." Patskan added the company wants to gut past practices, including the right to use "man's language" when debating with foremen.

"They want us to call in three or four hours ahead if we're going to be out, but they send you home with no notice at all," Lupcho declared. Lupcho also explained why vacation pay was such a hot issue. "The proposed \$830 per year doesn't even total a two-week paycheck," he said.

Another important issue in the strike is whether Pagnotti's Eckley, Pennsylvania, plant will be union. The contract offer stated

**Continued on Page 7**

## Washington keeps up threats to Yugoslavia

BY MEGAN ARNEY  
AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Clinton administration is confronting new hurdles in its plans for military intervention in the Kosova province of Yugoslavia. At the same time, the U.S. rulers' threats to bomb Yugoslavia have not abated.

U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke warned of a "collision course" between Belgrade and the imperialist NATO military alliance if the Yugoslav government continues to reject Washington's attempt to impose a "Bosnia-style" military occupation in Kosova. "The threat of greater war is ever present," Holbrooke declared March 9 upon his arrival in Belgrade.

A bipartisan debate has broken out among U.S. capitalist politicians, who are growing increasingly nervous over whether the imperialist intervention is the best use of U.S. firepower. "We are playing with a scorpion in the Balkans, and it is only a matter of time before we get stung," wrote Rep. Thomas DeLay, the majority whip of the House of Representatives in a March 9 *Wall*

**Continued on Page 14**

## U.S. rulers turn INS into biggest cop force

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. rulers have escalated their assault on the rights of immigrant workers since President William Clinton signed the so-called Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act in 1996. Almost 300,000 immigrants have been deported in the last two years — a record high that is more than twice the number who were expelled in the previous two years.

Meanwhile, a February 24 ruling by the Supreme Court asserted that undocumented immigrants are not protected under the First Amendment — freedom of speech, press, and assembly. In the ruling, Justice Antonin Scalia wrote, "an alien unlawfully in this country has no constitutional right to assert selective enforcement [because of political views] as a defense against his deportation."

The Supreme Court ruling reinforces a section of the 1996 Immigration law that gives Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials, not judges, the authority to deport immigrants. The decision can be made in a matter of hours and without a lawyer representing the worker. The law expanded the definition of "deportable crimes" and directs the INS to expel immigrants convicted of crimes, even if they are legal residents of the United States.

The INS is now the largest federal police agency, with a \$1 billion war chest and more than 15,000 officers carrying weapons and authorized to make arrests. This is more cops than the Customs Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Prisons or the FBI. "We apprehend and take into custody more people than any other agency in the world," boasted INS spokesman

**Continued on Page 12**

## Cop killing in N.Y. sparks sustained protests

BY AL DUNCAN  
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

NEW YORK — Five hundred people, overwhelmingly young, protested at City Hall here March 8 demanding the four cops who killed Amadou Diallo, a street vendor from Guinea, on February 4 be arrested and prosecuted. Two days later 1,000 high school students cut classes for a similar protest.

On March 3, more than 5,000 people ral-

lied on Wall Street in front of the New York Stock Exchange in one of the largest demonstrations against the acceleration of police brutality exemplified in the brutal killing of Diallo. A number of protesters pointed out that a month after the police fired 41 bullets at the unarmed immigrant worker, riddling his body with 19 of the shots and killing him instantly, city authorities have made no arrests and have even refused to take the

four police officers off duty.

Most protesters in these actions have been Black. The majority at the March 3 rally were workers. "I have been reading about the protests and came out today because I am angry," said Eric Volpe, a rail worker from Hoboken, New Jersey. "This is a good rally but there should be more white faces. They have armies of police out here while they are cutting back libraries."

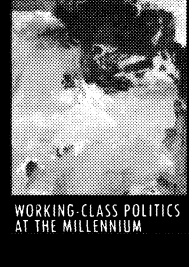
Cynthia Julies, a nurse administrator, said she took the day off work March 3 to take part in the noontime rally to demand the cops who killed Diallo be prosecuted. "We need to unite because we have no justice," she told *Militant* reporters. "It's a police attitude. It's not a Black-white thing." Drivers for United Parcel Service and other members of the Teamsters union also came.

These recent protests have been typical of the dozens of demonstrations that have now taken place since February 4. They register a sustained resistance to police violence and the attempts by many among the city's rulers to either justify cop brutality — for making middle-class and other neighborhoods "safer" from the "underclass" — or propose "reforms" to shore up the image of the New York Police Department (NYPD).

The space to organize such actions has been widened by differences among the ruling class on how to handle this latest crisis. Democratic Party politicians, especially those representing the views of middle-class

**Continued on Page 14**

JACK BARNES  
**CAPITALISM'S  
WORLD DISORDER**



**\$17**

**SPECIAL OFFER FROM PATHFINDER**  
For members of the Pathfinder Readers Club  
Regular price \$23.95

### Capitalism's World Disorder Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

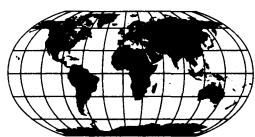
BY JACK BARNES

This may be the only *millennium* title on bookstore shelves today whose purpose is not to mystify and obscure but to reveal and clarify. The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all

around us are not chaos. They are the inevitable product of lawful and understandable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us is not the future that inevitably must be. It can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action, and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. That is what this book has been written to bring closer.

Available at bookstores listed on page 12,  
or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

**Demagogic Minnesota governor promotes austerity — page 6**



## S. Korea unions threaten strike

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), representing some 550,000 workers in heavy industry, walked out of "reform and restructuring" talks between government officials, bosses, and union officials, protesting the unions non-role in the meetings. Unionists threatened an "all-out fight" in March and April that would include strikes and rallies. KCTU officials charge the government with failure to provide a social security net for the unemployed and to monitor company layoffs of workers. Unemployment in south Korea is at 8 percent, a record high.

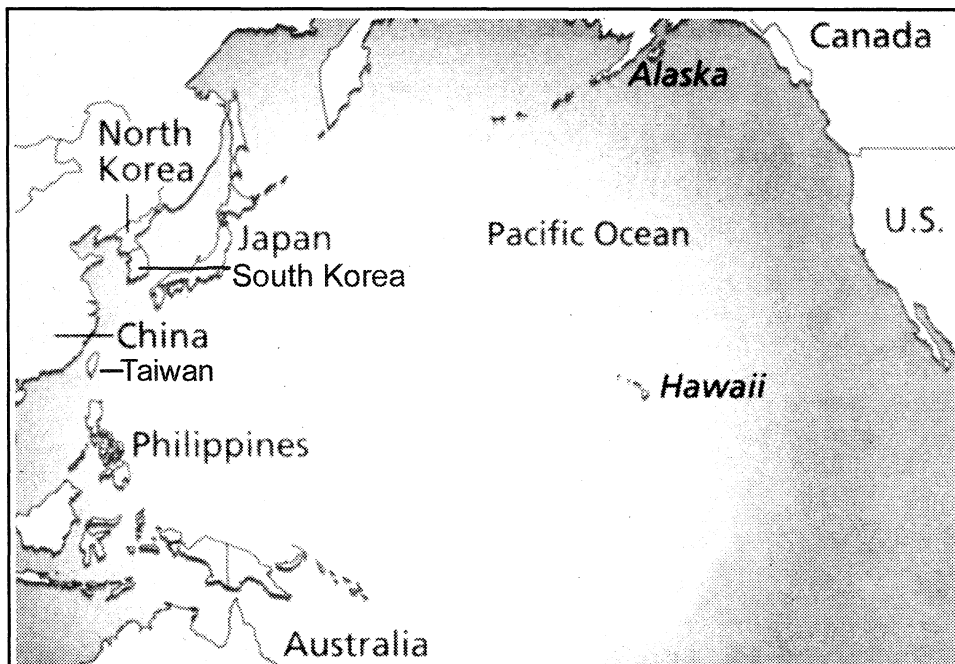
"There will be on-off strikes and production losses, but nothing serious," opined Rhee Namuh, head of research for Samsung Securities. Others are not so sure. "The restructuring now taking place is for the *chaebols*, whose labor unions are well organized, unlike the workers from the small- and medium-sized companies," warned Koh Wonjong, head of research at Nomura Securities. The south Korean government has threatened to crack down on any labor actions. This has seldom deterred south Korean toilers.

## Beijing warns U.S. government on 'missile shield' over Taiwan

A senior official in Beijing warned Washington that its march toward arming the Taiwanese government with antimissile capabilities and placing the country of 21 million people under the "shield" of Uncle Sam would be "the last straw," which would "certainly lead to serious consequences." Reiterating that Taiwan always has been and will be part of China, the official asked journalists March 5, "Pumping F-16s and missile defense systems into an American state — how would they feel?"

He described a Pentagon assertion that the U.S.-funded military upgrade will not be operational until 2007 as a useless attempt "to pacify China." He charged the U.S. government with selling arms to Taiwan to make money, as well as providing a "pretext to strengthen their military alliance" to maintain domination of the region. There are more than 100,000 U.S. troops in Asia, including 37,000 in the south Korea.

"Look at north Korea," the Chinese official said. "They are a great people, a very



China and surrounding countries Washington seeks to arm with antimissile "shield." Among them are Taiwan, south Korea, and Japan. Also included in the scheme is Alaska.

proud people, but it is a small country.... [For Washington to] say north Korea is posing such a huge security threat to a superpower.... You expect us to trust that?" The official made clear Beijing's rejection of a proposal made by U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright in a recent trip to China that the U.S. would back off of arming Taiwan and other countries in Asia if China would pressure North Korea to halt its military defense program. "We cannot agree to that kind of linkage," the official said. "Taiwan has nothing to do with this."

## Depression in Japan deepens

Tokyo faces a deepening economic crisis. Recession conditions not seen in decades in Japan dealt a crushing blow to imports in January, expanding Tokyo's trade surplus to \$6.28 billion — an 87 percent jump compared to January 1998. A country's trade surplus is the measure of all goods exported minus those imported. Japan's rose 33 percent from December 1998 to January 1999. Imports fell 22.1 percent as record unemployment shrunk domestic demand.

Household spending in Japan fell 2.2 per-

cent in 1998, and industrial output fell for eight of the past 12 months. This is driving bosses there to rely more on sales abroad. But exports shrunk 10.6 percent in January. Steel shipped to the United States, for example, fell 25 percent compared to a year earlier. Tokyo's trade surplus "reflects the severity of Japan's depressed domestic demand," said Satoru Ogasawara, a Credit Suisse First Boston economist. "The gap between exports and imports will continue to grow."

## Acquittal of U.S. pilot for deaths of 20 in Italy sparks outrage

The acquittal of a U.S. Marines pilot on charges of involuntary manslaughter for flying his plane into a ski-lift cable, killing 20, has sparked outrage in Italy. A military court in North Carolina cleared Cpt. Richard Ashby of the charges in the Feb. 3, 1998, incident. Some Italian politicians have demanded parliament review the NATO base accords under which U.S. forces are stationed there. But Italian defense minister Carlo Scognamiglio insisted the verdict should not harm relations between Washington and Rome.

Visiting U.S. president William Clinton in Washington the day after the March 4 verdict, Italian prime minister Massimo D'Alema stated that his government expects those responsible to be punished. "It is not normal for a military aircraft to fly in a valley 300 feet above the ground," he declared. The cable was sliced at 360 feet, when under regulations the plane should have been at least 1,000 feet above the ground. Clinton replied that he was "profoundly regretful and apologetic" about the deaths.

## Ecuadoran currency is sliding

The Ecuadoran sucre lost 23 percent of its value in a three-day plunge that began March 2. Rumors of a bank seizure by the government and another looming bank collapse gave

foreign investors the jitters. The Ecuadoran government is facing its worst economic crisis in 20 years as oil, one of its principal sources of income, has plummeted in price. Last year, Ecuador's inflation was at 43.4 percent, the highest in Latin America.

## Dairy farmers face big price drop

April will usher in the worst one-month drop in milk prices in history, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The floor price farmers receive for milk will plunge to \$10.27 per hundred pounds, from \$16.27. The largest drop before this was recorded at \$2.52, cited an economist for the National Milk Producers Federation. Capitalist economists blame increased production. "We're in a market where a lot of milk is being produced and that's driving the prices down," says economist Chris Nubern. These prices are set each month by the government. Small dairy farmers, who face the tightest margins, will feel the biggest sting. Even the March price was below most farmers' cost of production.

## School vouchers debate in N.Y.

New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani is pushing to pilot test a school voucher system in one of New York City's 32 community school districts. The voucher program would take public money to fund private schools. Giuliani's proposal was launched during his 1999 State of the City address in January. He said the plan would involve students whose parents fall "at or below the poverty level."

This scheme has drawn opposition from other city officials who say that more money should be allocated to improve public education. School Chancellor Rudy Crew threatened to resign if the measure is passed. Much of the funding would go to religious schools, which stands in violation of the New York State constitution that forbids the use of public funds for these schools, with the exception of student transportation.

## Women's prisons: dehumanizing

A March 4 report issued by Amnesty International documents the degrading treatment of inmates who are women across the United States. Prison cops have been sexually harassing and assaulting women behind bars. This includes rape by male guards, or "favors" in exchange for sexual acts. These crimes — the ones that are exposed — largely go unpunished. Police guards in the prisons are known to put inmates "on eyeball." This is a degrading status where prisoners' clothes are replaced with hospital-style paper gowns. They are watched at every moment — in the shower, on the toilet, and anywhere else — often by male cops.

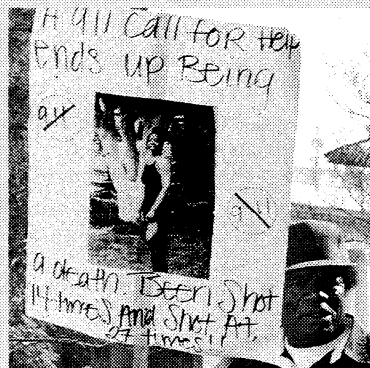
Since 1992, 60 people in Arizona alone were dismissed for sexual misconduct with woman prisoners. Two years ago in Massachusetts, prison police were accused of rousing 112 women from their beds and strip-searching 16 of them in front of the prison staff. The Department of Corrections denied the Amnesty allegations.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

# THE MILITANT

## Protest police brutality!

From New York to Los Angeles, from London to Toronto, cop attacks on working people are escalating. The 'Militant' explains why the working class must combat acquiescence to the police serving as judge, jury, and executioner for the capitalist rulers. Don't miss a single issue!



# SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

## NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

### RENEWAL

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A15 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • Belgium, 500 BF • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,500 • New Zealand, NZ\$15 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

## The Militant

Vol. 63/No. 11  
Closing news date: March 11, 1999

Editor: NAOMI CRAINE  
Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS  
Editorial Staff: Megan Arney, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Taylor, and Maurice Williams.  
Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from July to August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: TheMilitant or via Peacenet at: themilitant Internet: TheMilitant@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

The Militant can be accessed on the internet at: gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org/11/pubs/militant Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

**Latin America, Caribbean:** for one-years-

scription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. **Asia:** send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

**Canada:** Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 4581 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2L4.

**Britain, Ireland:** £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. **Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East:** £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. **France:** Send FF420 for one-year subscription to Militant, Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U. **Belgium:** BF 2,400 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. **Iceland:** Send 5,400 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. **Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:** 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. **New Zealand:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.



# Sinn Fein leader gets big welcome in Australia

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia—"We will only get as much freedom as we take," Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams told 450 people at the Australian Jockey Club here on February 26.

"Those who think that in some way their race or nation or tribe or religion is better than somebody else's are actually playing the game of the exploiter and making his or her job more easy," he said.

The Irish leader was accompanied on his first visit to Australia by Sinn Fein leaders Ann O'Sullivan, Dodie McGuinness, and others. O'Sullivan has replaced McGuinness on Sinn Fein's Australia Desk, and McGuinness is now the party's national election campaign director. The party is the third largest, in terms of votes, in the British-occupied six counties of Northern Ireland, and is leading the struggle for a united Ireland free of British control.

The delegation visited Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, and Perth from February 22 to March 1. The tour, organized through Australian Aid for Ireland (AAI), received extensive media coverage. For two years the Australian government had maintained a formal visa ban against Adams, but was forced to back down last November.

## Adams visa: victory for all

"The denial of a visa to me was never about stopping me. It was about stopping people here from having information," Adams told a national news conference at Sydney's Hotel Intercontinental on February 22.

Some 30 percent of the population here is of Irish descent. The majority of Britain's settlements in Australia originated as penal colonies in the wake of the loss of 13 of its colonies in North America in the American revolution. Starting nearly 200 years ago and for many decades after, "some were sent because they were political activists, revo-



Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams at memorial in Sydney for 10 Irish political prisoners who died on hunger strike while in the infamous Long Kesh prison in Belfast.

lutionaries. Others because they stole a loaf of bread or poached a rabbit to keep their families from starvation." None came voluntarily, Adams noted.

"It is possible, if we get more people involved in this struggle, if we get the strength of the Irish diaspora...the sacrifices that people have to make back at home can be lessened. And then not only will we get freedom and justice, but we'll get it with less

risk, we'll get it in a shorter time, and we'll get it in a way which leaves behind an Ireland which is stable, and which can best develop economic and social policies best suited to the betterment of the majority of the people on the island," Adams told 450 AAI members and guests at the Harold Park Function Centre here on February 27.

In response to repeated questions from the big-business media about the Irish Repub-

lican Army (IRA) "decommissioning," or handing over its weapons, Adams explained, "The peace process is not stalled on decommissioning. That is an excuse. It is stalled because the next steps to bring about the institutions agreed to on Good Friday [in 1998] and which were due to be in place last year need to be put in place quickly.... Decommissioning is an objective, not a condition of [the peace process]." The British government and Unionist (pro-British) parties in Northern Ireland have stalled in implementing the terms of the accord.

## Truth about freedom struggle

"The north of Ireland has never been a normal society. It isn't now. It has yet to be transformed," Adams told 1,000 people at the University of New South Wales February 27. He was greeted by a standing ovation. The talk was televised nationally by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"The whole spiral of discrimination and of resistance, of pogrom and of resistance, all brought the gun back into Irish politics... almost 30 years ago," he said. "Loyalists killed Catholics, bombed, inflicted pogroms. The RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary], which was the state police, was also involved in a whole series of killings of peaceful civil rights marchers. Then, and only then, until 1970 and 1971, did republicans take up the gun defensively."

Describing the discrimination Catholics face — a pillar of London's rule over the six counties — Adams said that unemployment in his district in Belfast stands at 64 percent, that Catholics are twice as likely to be unemployed, and 85 percent of men in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh prison were there solely on the basis of forced confessions. He had "been in prison for almost five years, on two or three occasions so far, and I have yet to have the benefit of a jury trial," he said. "These are all matters of injustice that need to be 'decommissioned' alongside the question of weapons...."

"Since we came here, there has been one grenade attack on an isolated nationalist home as part of a pattern for the last number of months," Adams added.

## 'Belfast aborigine'

Initially speaking in Gaelic at the national news conference, Adams then described himself as "an aboriginal person from Belfast." He urged the Australian government to treat Aborigines with respect and equality. Adams met with national Aboriginal representatives, including Lowitja O'Donoghue and Mick Dodson, in Sydney on February 22. He noted later the "common colonial history of dispossession and genocide" and the need for mutual support.

Adams met with the National Executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions in Melbourne, publicly thanked the Maritime Union of Australia for its longtime support, and met with wharfies at the Fremantle MUA hall near Perth.

He also sent a solidarity message to a 1,200-strong February 27 rally for striking coal miners engaged in the biggest union battle in the country at the moment at the Gordonstone mine near Emerald, Queensland.

Adams also met with several politicians. The mayor of Brisbane, James Soorley, hosted a February 23 City Hall reception attended by more than 1,000 people.

In the course of the visit, only one anti-Sinn Fein protest occurred of eight people in Brisbane.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

# New right-wing party is formed in Canada

BY JAMES WHITTON

MONTREAL — At a conference dominated by the Reform Party and some forces in the Conservative party, held in Ottawa February 19-21, delegates voted 55 percent in favor of forming a new party of the right. The "United Alternative" conference was initiated by the right-wing Reform Party. In his main speech to the conference, Reform Party leader Preston Manning said, "The object of this conference is to create a united governing alternative to the federal Liberals based on principles." The founding convention will take place over the next year.

Since the founding of Canada in 1867 and up to the 1993 federal elections, the governing party in Canada has alternated between two capitalist parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. In the 1993 election, the Conservatives virtually collapsed, from being the governing party with 155 seats to 2 seats. Two new parties entered parliament that year. The Bloc Quebecois, which promotes Quebec sovereignty, won 54 seats, all from Quebec. The Reform Party garnered 52 seats, almost all from western Canada.

While the Reform Party gained 60 seats in the 1997 election and became the official opposition, it did not win any seats west of Manitoba and has virtually no support in Quebec. In several Ontario seats, a united Reform Party and Conservative vote would defeated the Liberal candidate.

About 60 percent of the 1,400 delegates present at the conference were members of the Reform Party. About half of the rest were or had been members of the Conservative party, although Conservative leader Joe Clark and his 19 Members of Parliament all refused to attend. Clark insists he will not join the "United Alternative."

Several prominent leaders of the Conservative party in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario were present. Alberta premier Ralph Klein, who heads the Conservative party in that province, gave the opening keynote address. Also participating were Alberta treasurer Stockwell Day, Ontario transportation minister Tony Clement, and Hal Jackman, former lieutenant governor of Ontario.

In his opening speech, Klein proposed some changes in program he said would be necessary for the new party to replace the Liberals as the governing party. He warned, "We cannot, as those who adhere to a conservative philosophy, declare ourselves to be the party of minimum interference in the

everyday lives of Canadians, and then propose to interfere in the most personal of all decisions." He was referring to past positions of the Reform Party against homosexuality and abortion. Manning's speech to the convention avoided these questions and was generally very vague in an attempt to broaden the base of the new party.

Klein also said it was necessary to "fix the maddening trend towards judge-made law." He was aiming at some recent cases where high courts have made judgments which go in the direction of enlarging democratic rights. For example, in British Columbia recently a judge ruled that a law prohibiting possession of child pornography violated the right to freedom of expression.

On the issue of Quebec, Klein called on delegates to recognize its "distinct" character. He explained, "saying we are all equal, is to deny the history of the birth of our nation."

This is markedly different from the approach of the Reform Party, which has been to argue that all the provinces should be treated in the same fashion. During the last federal elections in 1997, the Reform Party aired an anti-Quebecois TV ad which showed pictures of the leaders of the four other major parties, all of whom are Quebecois, and called for "a voice for all Canadians, not just Quebec politicians." At the convention Manning advocated "not separation, not the status quo, but a third way.... It involves focusing for the immediate present on a rebalancing of the powers between Ottawa and the provinces."

The Quebecois are a French-speaking oppressed nation within Canada, representing 80 percent of the 7 million people living in Quebec. The discrimination they suffer on the basis of the language they speak and the denial of their right to self-determination has been a pillar of capitalist domination of Canada for more than 150 years.

The conference overwhelmingly rejected a motion to "extend a special welcome to French-speaking Canadians to join the United Alternative movement." Not surprisingly, given the Reform Party's history of opposition to Quebecois rights, there were only 62 delegates present from Quebec.

At the same time, the "United Alternative" conference was meeting, tensions were heating up between the Federal and Quebec governments. In particular, in the recent federal budget the government decided that from now on payments to the provinces for

health care will be allocated on a per capita basis, instead of favoring the poorer provinces such as Quebec, as has been the case in the past. This means that over the next five years Ontario will receive a supplementary amount of CAN\$5.33 billion, while Quebec will only receive CAN\$1.4 billion. The end of this policy has been sharply denounced by the Quebec government and has led to a publicity war between Ottawa and Quebec.

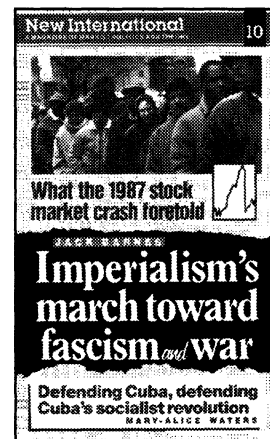
As well Quebec refused to sign a social union pact with Ottawa, which was signed by the other nine provinces, because the agreement would give the federal government the power to oversee how funds were used for social programs. This is an attack on the limited powers that Quebec now has in social programs and health care.

Canada's two national English-language dailies had different reactions to the United Alternative conference. *The Globe and Mail* editorialized, "We now have three alternatives on the right, which doesn't look like much progress."

The editors of the *National Post* concluded approvingly that despite unresolved debates, "It's just possible now that the [Prime Minister Jean] Chrétien Liberals could face a real threat in the next federal election."

One sharp critic of the conference was Stephen Harper, a former Reform Member of Parliament and head of the right-wing pressure group, the National Citizens Coalition. He told the *National Post* that the "touchy-feely" approach of the conference would give ground to the Liberals.

## NEW INTERNATIONAL: A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY



## Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

Jack Barnes

"There will be new Hitlers, new Mussolinis. That is inevitable. What is not inevitable is that they will triumph. The working-class vanguard will organize our class to fight back against the devastating toll we are made to pay for the capitalist crisis. The future of humanity will be decided in the contest between these contending class forces." In *New International* no. 10. \$14

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

# Toronto: students back school staff strike

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, California, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429. E-mail: 105162.605@compuserve.com

BY GABRIEL CHARBIN

TORONTO — The 14,400 support staff workers in Toronto schools, organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 4400, began a strike February 27. The strikers are janitors, secretaries, educational assistants, and instructors. About 75 percent are women.

The unionists are fighting the effects of the \$300 million (Can\$1=US\$0.65) cut the Ontario provincial government is attempting to implement in the education system by attacking job security, working conditions, wages, and benefits.

On the morning of March 8, CUPE targeted 20 high schools and set up mass pickets of hundreds of strikers from neighboring schools, aiming to close down or severely hamper school operations that day.

At Harbord Collegiate Institute, hundreds joined the mass picket, including dozens of students. Harbord's teachers and many students stood across the street from the picket line. At 10:42 a.m., two hours after class was supposed to have begun, Frederick Kuehn, a Harbord teacher, picked up the bull horn and announced, "We're going home." Loud cheers and applause greeted his declaration of solidarity, as teachers dispersed. Five

schools were closed by pickets that day.

Students had already staged two walk-outs at Harbord the previous week. On March 3, some 300 students walked out of school at 9:15 a.m. to join pickets and marched to the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), where they rallied for an hour. The next day, 100 Harbord students walked out.

Students explained school conditions are unsanitary, with paper and other garbage littering the halls, toilets flooded, and a bad smell hanging over everything. The School Board persists in organizing daily health inspections and declaring schools fit to operate. Twenty-one schools have been officially closed during the strike because they are heated by old boilers, which require operation by the stationary engineers on strike.

Ellen Sunter, a striking educational assistant, was at the mass picket at West Toronto Collegiate Institute on March 8. She said teachers had been joining the picket lines before work and at recess, bringing coffee and donuts. "Then they asked us whether we were getting sick of junk food and promised to bring sandwiches instead."

Some 126,000 Ontario teachers walked the picket lines for two weeks in the fall of 1997 in protest against education cuts.

As Sunter spoke, Toronto bus drivers and car passengers honked their horns in support. After 12 years, Sunter earns CAN\$17 per hour, but still makes under \$23,000 a year because of a short six-hour workday and a layoff every summer.

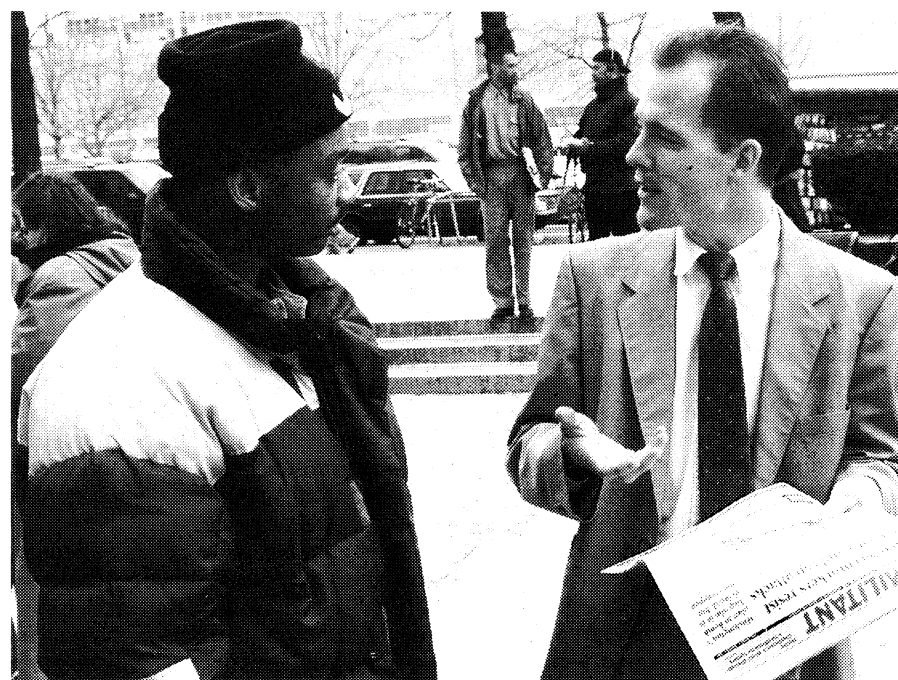
Support is expressed in many different ways. Teachers from at least one of the schools that have been officially closed dur-

ing the strike, Oakwood Collegiate, drive a daily morning car convoy to the picket lines at schools that are operating. On March 5 Harbord's principal and vice principals arrived in the morning to find the door needed to access the entire school was glued shut. When the Toronto District School Board locksmith arrived, he refused to cross the picket line.

During International Women's Day March 6, CUPE strikers who are women were given a large standing ovation, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation called a support rally outside the downtown Board of Education offices on March 10.

Gabriel Charbin is a student at Harbord Collegiate Institute.

## Garment worker announces mayor campaign in Philadelphia



Militant/John Staggs

Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Philadelphia Jason Coughlin (right) declared his campaign March 3 at City Hall, and later participated in a protest against welfare cuts going into effect in Pennsylvania that day. Two radio stations, NPR and KYW, announced Coughlin's campaign that morning.

## Nearly 300 readers renew 'Militant' subs

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Socialist workers and members of the Young Socialists wrapped up a four-week campaign to win renewals and sell copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. We went over the *Militant* goal, selling 293 renewals, but face a bigger challenge to increase the long-term readership of Spanish-speaking workers. The campaign for *PM* came up short with 41 renewals.

An essential component of the sales drive included getting the two publications into the hands of vanguard workers. Supporters in Illinois made an extra push to sell copies of *Militant* issue no. 9, which featured a tribute to Rodney Garman, who was a member of United Auto Workers Local 974 and a longtime leader of the resistance to the Caterpillar bosses' assaults on the union.

Reaching out to working farmers was a highlight of the campaign. Several farmers renewed their subscriptions while participating in meetings to discuss the proposed settlement in a class-action suit filed against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for discrimination against farmers who are Black.

Below are reports on sales activities during the last week of the campaign. The *Militant* encourages its supporters to keep building farm and labor actions and send notices into the *Militant* to publicize them.

❖

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS

CLEVELAND, Ohio — We sold 72 copies of the *Militant* during the last eight days of the campaign, more than doubling the previous high. We had increased our goal to 50, aiming to use the *Militant* to build solidarity with the Steelworkers' fight for a contract at RMI Titanium in Niles, Ohio. Locals 2155 and 2155-7 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) are organizing a rally at noon on March 28 in Niles.

Gary West, a member of USWA Local 3241 at Magnetic Specialties, Inc. (MSI) in Marietta, Ohio, said in a phone interview that the other day co-workers passed the local newspaper around the plant because it had a picture from the RMI strike. The picture contained a person wearing a hat with a button in solidarity with the recent strike by steelworkers at MSI.

"This shows that even though we're a small group, if we can do it, so can they," said West. "People from all over came to our

rallies. Everyone had a history, a story to tell: Firestone, Ravenswood, Wheeling-Pitt, and many others. Just like theirs, our struggle carries on too."

A team of *Militant* supporters went to southern Ohio where coal is mined. A coal truck operator and nine miners bought copies, one saying he was glad to see the *Militant* again after a long absence.

Students at nearby Ohio University in Athens also gave the socialist press a warm reception, buying several copies, two subscriptions, and a dozen Pathfinder titles. Student Chris Crews renewed his *Militant* subscription and bought the newest Pathfinder publication *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Asking the socialists to come back in a couple of weeks, Crews added, "I'd really like to have a discussion with you guys about the role of the working class."

One of the highlights of the week was the response of steelworkers at Century Aluminum (formerly Ravenswood Aluminum) in Ravenswood, West Virginia. A team of supporters from Cleveland and Pittsburgh sold 41 copies of the *Militant* to workers at the plant gate there. Workers said they were getting ready for the expiration of their contract with Century Aluminum.

❖

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

ATLANTA — Supporters of the *Militant* here sold 20 copies of the paper to members of the Machinists union at Lockheed Martin's Marietta plant in Georgia as these workers prepared for a possible strike. One team sold 11 copies of the *Militant* at a plant gate as about 25 workers left the facility after Saturday overtime.

Team member Jill Fein reports that "workers were interested in talking about everything, much more than just the labor coverage, including the fight of farmers and the front-page article on the conviction of the racist who dragged James Byrd Jr. to his death in Jasper, Texas."

A second team sold at the union hall to workers as they cast their vote on the proposed contract. Allen Jackson was one of nine workers who picked up the *Militant*. "I feel for the Black farmers," he said. "My father had 110 acres. He died in 1964. The government began to pay us not to farm and by '69 we lost the farm and I lost a dream. Whatever I can do to help them, I'll gladly do."

### Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Renewal/Single Issue Circulation Drive February 6-March 7

	Sub renewal						Single issues			
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold		Militant	PM		
Australia	4	5	125%	1	2		20	14		1
Canada										
Montreal	1	2	200%	2	1		22	33	5	0
Vancouver	7	8	114%				40	36		
Toronto	8	8	100%	1	3		50	39	5	1
Canada Total	16	18	113%	3	4		112	108	10	1
New Zealand										
Christchurch	3	3	100%				25	57		
Auckland	5	6	120%				25	51		
N.Z. Total	8	9	113%				50	108		
United States										
Twin Cities, MN	10	19	190%	2	1		45		3	
Boston	8	12	150%	3	3		30	41	3	6
Houston	8	12	150%	2	2		40		5	
Pittsburgh	8	12	150%	2	0		40	48		
Philadelphia	8	11	138%	2	2		45	25	2	0
Miami*	15	20	133%	4	4		30	29	5	3
Los Angeles	20	26	130%	8	4		80		8	
Washington, D.C.	15	19	127%	4	3		40	52	3	1
Cleveland*	4	5	125%	1	0		50	72	2	0
Des Moines	8	10	125%	4	2		40		15	
Detroit	10	12	120%	2	2		50	21		1
Seattle	14	16	114%	3	1		40	30	2	2
Birmingham, AL	14	15	107%	2	2		45	45	1	2
Atlanta	7	7	100%	3	1		55	49	4	0
Chicago	15	15	100%	5	0		60	104	8	0
San Francisco	13	13	100%	8	0		70	75	15	0
Newark, NJ	25	17	68%	10	4		100	47	5	12
New York	30	13	43%	13	4		115	38	25	1
U.S. Total	232	254	109%	78	35		975	676	106	28
Iceland	3	3	100%				4			
United Kingdom										
London	10	4	40%	2	0		50			
Manchester	3		0%				30			
UK Total	13	4	31%	2	0		80			
Sweden	3	0	0%	1	0		23			
Int'l totals	279	293	105%	85	41		1264	906	116	30
Int'l goals/ should be	275	275	100%	85	85		1250		100	

\* = Raised goal



# Pathfinder appeals for capital funds for next stage in transformation of printshop

## \$250,000 needed to upgrade single press room and improve quality, productivity

BY NAOMICRAINE

Pathfinder is appealing to its supporters for the capital funds needed to carry out an essential new stage in increasing productivity and lowering the costs of producing the books and pamphlets needed by workers and farmers engaged in struggle.

Since December, Pathfinder's printshop has been using computer-to-plate (CTP) technology to eliminate the skilled, labor-intensive prepress work that was necessary before. Decisive to increasing productivity and cutting costs in a sustainable way, however, is taking steps forward in the organization of labor in the shop.

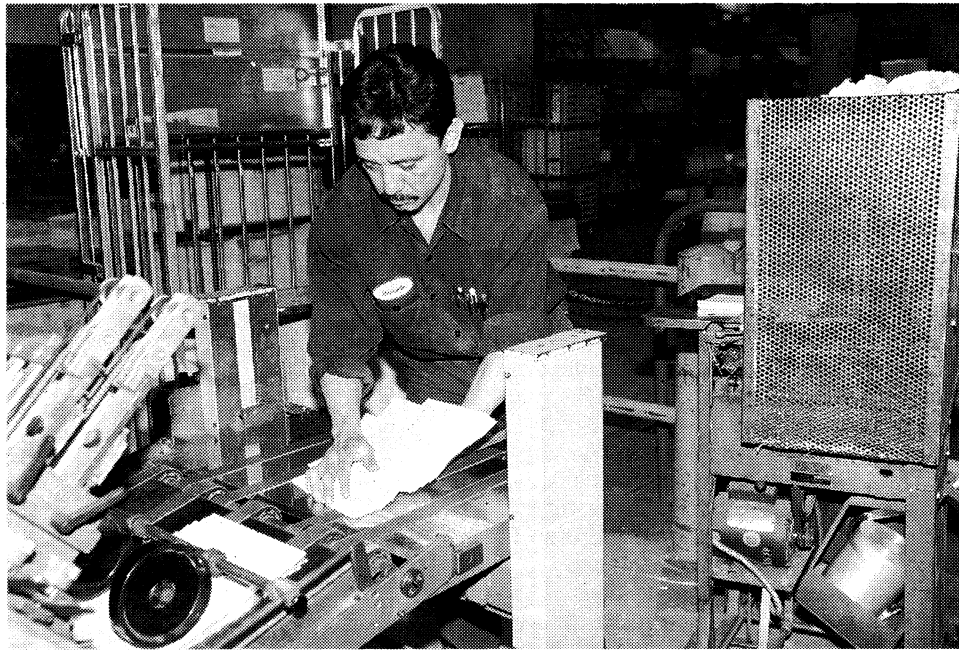
The next capital improvement will be to qualitatively upgrade the temperature, humidity, and dust controls that are crucial to high productivity and high-quality printing. This step will end the physical separation between those operating the sheetfed presses, where the text and covers of Pathfinder books are produced, and the web press used to print the *Militant*. Above all, this will advance the organization of a single press department, with operators trained to run all three presses and the computer-to-plate equipment.

When the printshop acquired its two state-of-the-art Heidelberg sheetfed presses in 1993, an enclosure was built to protect them from the dust produced by the web press and paper storage on the main press room floor. This was intended as a temporary measure, and left many issues unresolved. Resolving them is now a crucial element in sustaining a smaller shop.

Nell Wheeler, who heads up the shop's press department, explained, "We're organizing the steps needed to end the physical separation of the press department as quickly as possible." Fundamentally, this means installing new dust and climate controls. "From there, with the enclosure removed, we'll move on to add windows that let in the sunlight, more professional industrial lighting, and a new floor that is safer and can be kept clean."

These steps are important for improving quality and productivity on both the web and sheetfed presses. "The most important reason," she said, "is to advance the labor-saving, cost-cutting methods of work of the human beings who run the presses and produce quality printing."

This means continuing to expand the cross-training of web and sheetfed press operators. Every press operator is also learning to prepare digital files and run the CTP platemaker; there is no separate department responsible for making plates. These steps,



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Gerardo Sánchez folds signatures of *Capitalism's World Disorder* in printshop bindery.

together with the labor saved by eliminating prepress, are making it possible to have a shop staff that is nearly a third smaller, freeing up more socialist workers to carry out political work in the trade unions.

### \$250,000 needed for Capital Fund

The project of upgrading a single press room, from start to finish, will cost about \$250,000.

Since July, supporters of the communist movement have contributed more than \$700,000 to the Pathfinder Capital Fund, needed to purchase the \$350,000 CTP system and meet related expenses to renovate the printing factory. This tremendous response makes it possible to confidently project raising the additional \$250,000.

An important part of the fund has come from industrial workers contributing production and "profit sharing" bonuses, many of which originate in concession contracts. Other contributions ranging from \$1,000 to \$50,000 have come from windfalls such as bequests, accident settlements, and trusts. The success of the appeal depends on two components: continuing the many contributions from \$1,000 up to several thousand dollars, and contributions from those in a position to give tens of thousands from larger capital sources. Both will be essential in this next stage.

Rapidly collecting outstanding pledges to the fund is also necessary to meet current obligations.

The advances of the last few months in the shop are reflected not only in the production of Pathfinder books, but an upturn in the commercial work produced in the shop. Commercial sales, which are essential to maintaining the shop, both financially and in terms of skills, had suffered a serious drop in recent months, which is now in the process of being reversed. Continuing this reversal will make it possible to soon end the necessary deferral of capital funds to meet operating expenses because of the drop, and for the shop to begin to regenerate this capital.

### The pipeline is flowing

At the same time, more than 100 volunteers around the world have been working to put every Pathfinder book in digital form — from text to photographs and covers. Each month since December, this special brigade has turned in to Pathfinder five complete books, ready to be printed in the shop — a big step toward their monthly goal of 10. There is now beginning to be a steady pipeline of books coming into the shop to be printed.

The night before this issue went to press, *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 6 was completed and shipped to workers in France who will immediately begin reading and selling it. It is the new French translation of *New International* no. 11, featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by Jack Barnes.

In addition to the just-released *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-*

*Class Politics at the Millennium*, 10 Pathfinder books or pamphlets are in various stages of production in the shop this month. These include reprintings of *Feminism and Marxism*, *Leon Trotsky Speaks*, *Women and the Cuban Revolution*, *The Last Year of Malcolm X*, and *New International* no. 11.

Pathfinder and its printshop need to be able to produce books like these rapidly, and in small runs. That way resources aren't tied up in extra stock, but more copies of any particular title can be ready in a matter of days when the political need arises. And new books, like *Capitalism's World Disorder*, can be on bookshelves less two weeks after editorial work is complete. More than 1,000 copies of that book have been sent to distributors to fill initial orders.

### Bindery: backbone of the shop

The other shop department, the bindery where books are bound and shipped, is key to having a pipeline of books delivered each month. Gerardo Sánchez is a member of the committee that organizes the bindery. He runs the folder, the first stop for a Pathfinder book after it comes off the presses. Sheets printed on the sheetfed press are folded into 16-page signatures, which are then collated, bound, and trimmed.

Sánchez explained the importance of rapid training, which new volunteers coming into the shop begin getting in the bindery. The socialist cadre who work in the printshop put in a stint of about three years, on average. Several experienced workers who had been in the shop well over that length of time have recently been released, and new volunteers are coming in at an accelerated pace. "We need to have people with a month or two training to meet — and surpass — production rates that are standard in the printing industry," Sánchez noted.

Meeting this challenge brings out workers' imagination and capacities. "We learned a lot together about how to produce large books working on *Capitalism's World Disorder*," said Sánchez. One example he gave was collating the 32 signatures that make up the 516-page book. "We needed a better method for this particular book," to save time on this labor-intensive task. "We decided to set up the signatures on both sides of the table, instead of just one." That way each person put together a full book walking each way around the table.

Sánchez and another folder operator also worked out a more efficient way to fold the text for Pathfinder books, where there are a lot of signatures in small quantities. Instead of a single operator doing the job, as had been common, one loaded the signatures onto the folder and the other inspected them, keeping the machine running. For some other jobs, where there are a few signatures of a much larger quantity, one person can run the machine more efficiently.

### Capital Fund committee keeps up work

The Capital Fund Committee, made up of eight workers from across the United States, is continuing its work to raise the sums needed to advance this transformation of the printshop.

To find out how you can make a contribution, write to the Capital Fund Committee, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

## Organizing the growing support for SWP

BY JIM GOTESKY

RICHMOND, California — Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party from several San Francisco Bay Area cities area met here March 6 to discuss the growing support movement for the SWP.

Twenty-three supporters attended the meeting, which opened with a report by SWP National Committee member Norton Sandler.

"More than 100 supporters are involved in any given week in the project to keep Pathfinder's titles in print," Sandler said. "The total number who have volunteered for the project is in excess of 150," he said, including a couple dozen international volunteers.

"The team of volunteers is increasing their effectiveness as they get more experience. The volunteers have set their sights on steadily increasing the number of titles completed on CD ROM's each month until they reach 10 books a month," Sandler said. He noted that the project grew out of the work of Bay Area supporters but was only launched as an international effort 14 months ago at a Socialist Educational Conference held in Seattle.

Sandler described the fund-raising for the party that supporters around the country carry out that results in \$140,000 a year in donations to the party from monthly pledges. Sally Morrow who helps organize contributions from the Bay Area noted that

over the past year, monthly contributions to the party from supporters has increased from \$20,000 to \$30,000. With many nodding their heads, Morrow stated that this amount can be increased. "Our new goal should be realizable, but not conservative," she said.

Supporters of the party staff Pathfinder bookstores many hours a week across the country, Sandler emphasized. Many also sell the *Militant* every weekend in working-class neighborhoods and at conferences and demonstrations along with members of the SWP and the Young Socialists.

Volunteers also help on the data entry for subscriptions to the *Militant* and help proof-read the paper, Sandler stated.

"The politics unfolding today are what makes us active," stated Ruth Cheney, a member of the steering committee organizing the volunteer Pathfinder reprint project. Michelle Smith noted that as labor struggles "heat up, you want to do more for the party."

Many at the meeting stated they would like to pitch in more on helping to organize Militant Labor Forums, on various aspects of organization of Pathfinder bookstores, and on Socialist Workers election campaigns.

The challenge before the leadership of every SWP branch is to organize in such a way that it can tap the burst of support for the party that is growing, Sandler said. Supporters of the SWP are a barometer that is responding to the rapid changes underway

as trade unionists and working farmers reach out to each other in solidarity to strengthen their own fights and each others'.

Everyone attending the meeting was urged to attend and to help build the banquet dinner and report by the party leadership to the working-class public that will conclude the SWP convention in San Francisco April 3. The meeting ended in a spontaneous round of applause.

## YS holds Iraq forum on Iowa campus

BY RAY PARSONS

AMES, Iowa — The Young Socialist sponsored a well-attended teach-in on Iraq at Iowa State University (ISU) here February 17. The meeting, entitled "What's Behind the continuing U.S. Aggression Against Iraq?" included presentations from Young Socialists members Gustavo Herrarte and Amanda Ulman and from ISU professor Mack Shelley. Some 35 students participated in the meeting.

Herrarte, an ISU graduate student, opened the meeting with the history of imperialist domination of the Mideast. Shelley followed with facts about the 1991 Gulf war and its aftermath, pointing to the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis who

have died as a result of U.S.-imposed sanctions. Ulman, a packinghouse worker emphasized the connection of Washington's ongoing attacks on Iraq to the capitalist "war at home against workers' conditions of life and on the job.... We must demand the U.S. get out of Iraq, and oppose the 'no-fly zones.'"

One student objected to the broad political perspective laid out by Ulman, and urged that discussion be focused on Iraq itself.

Other students responded that it was important to discuss the struggles of workers in the United States and worldwide in order to understand the U.S. war moves in Iraq.

# Ventura's attack on social benefits goes hand in hand with tough-guy talk

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — "The free ride is over!" That was the buzz phrase of Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura's State of the State address on March 2.

Ventura, recently elected on the Reform Party ticket, stressed personal responsibility, rather than government-financed social programs, as he has since his election campaign last year. "The state of the state," he said, "is jeopardized by this weak notion that taxpayers must step forward to provide nearly unlimited resources to anyone who faces adversity."

A few weeks before, the governor made front-page news during a confrontation with 150 college students rallying at the State Capitol for more state money to reduce tuition at Minnesota state colleges. He challenged a single mother who explained that she needed more assistance to help support her family while attending college. "I don't want to seem hard-core," Ventura responded, "but why did you become a single parent? Is it government's job to make up for someone's mistakes?"

In an extensive interview with the *Pioneer Press*, Ventura elaborated on this issue. "What gives you the right to have children? Yes, you have that right. But do you have the right then to expect the government to pay you for those children?... You don't have a right to welfare. Welfare is charity." He contended that "we have to create a new mind-set, we have to reeducate people" to be more self-sufficient.

Right-wing columnist Mona Charen cheered Ventura's aggressive handling of the students' demands. "Perhaps you must have once been a Navy Seal," she wrote in a February 16 syndicated column, "or perhaps you need a wrestling career to supply the requisite courage, but Gov. Ventura met these protesters with the kind of brio rarely (never?) found in politics today."

## Slashing workers' hard-fought gains

Ventura states more bluntly (in a more "muscular fashion" according to Charen) than most Democratic and Republican politicians, the goal to substantially slash social benefits and entitlements that are the conquests of hard-fought battles by working people.

In order to take another big step to main-

tain their declining rates of profits, the employers need to tear apart Social Security, Medicare, and many other social programs. This has been clearly signaled by the Clinton administration. In his State of the Union address President William Clinton proposed, in the name of "saving" Social Security, re-opening the idea of privatizing it and gambling retirement benefits on Wall Street's stock market.

At the governor's conference in Washington, D.C., last month, Ventura was among the most vociferous in demanding fewer restrictions from Washington on the use of federal funds by state governments and even eliminating federal aid for education.

In U.S. politics, for many generations, arguing for greater "states rights" has been tantamount to permitting more inequality, less rights for working people, and more restrictions on organized labor. As it was the clarion call for segregationists in the South for many years, today it is the call for permitting state governments to disburse federal funds unequally at the expense of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, immigrant workers, and other particularly oppressed layers of workers and farmers.

Some journalists have expressed surprise that Ventura's proposed budget for Minnesota includes fewer cuts than his public statements in favor of throwing responsibility for child care, education, and other social needs back onto the family, the church, and private charities would suggest. In fact he opposes vouchers or other schemes promoted by the previous Republican administration to direct public funds to private schools.

Ventura recognizes that a head-on attack on government-funded programs can't be immediately implemented today. His goal is charting a course to help "reeducate" people to accept this road — a road that growing sections of the capitalist ruling class are beginning to think will be necessary. But moves to overturn Social Security and other working-class conquests will generate widespread resistance from working people.

This is what's behind beefing up and militarizing local police forces and increasing attacks on democratic rights. Ventura's tough-guy image then goes hand in hand with his proclamation that the alleged "free ride is over." His Bonapartist course, far from being an anomaly, is pointing in the direc-

## Newspaper workers, others rally in Detroit to win more jobs back



Militant/John Sarge

Blowing whistles to celebrate a judge's ruling that picket line noise does not violate city ordinances, 200 locked-out and returned Detroit newspaper workers along with supporters protested outside the Detroit News building March 2, demanding more workers be reinstated. On March 5 the unionists won a small victory when the National Labor Relations Board refused to reconsider two earlier rulings that ordered the newspapers to return 1,000 workers to their jobs. The NLRB can now go to the U.S. Court of Appeals to enforce its order. Another protest is called for March 12 at noon at the same location. A group of newspaper workers joined a picket by Communications Workers of America a few blocks away, who were protesting job losses.

tion that many in capitalist ruling circles believe will be necessary to crush a resistant working class.

## Insists on right to pack a gun

It is in this context that Ventura, a former member of the Navy's elite SEAL unit, last month pressed for approval to bear a concealed gun anywhere he goes, including the State Capitol.

After getting the police chief in the suburb of Maple Grove, where he lives, to issue him a gun-carrying permit, state law still barred Ventura from carrying a weapon into state buildings. In an unusual move, he was exempted from this restriction, however, by the signed authorization of the public safety commissioner, a state official whom he had just appointed.

During a radio interview, Ventura asserted that as chief law enforcement officer and commander in chief of the Minnesota National Guard he should be able to carry a weapon as he sees fit.

As he often does, Ventura trumpeted again his experience as a SEAL when he was in Washington, D.C., for the National Gov-

ernors Association winter meeting. He was asked by reporters about a case before the U.S. Supreme Court in which the Chippewa Indians are asserting their right to fish without state restrictions in areas covered by treaty rights.

"If those rules [specified by long-standing treaties] apply," the tough-talking governor stated, "then they ought to be back in birch-bark canoes instead of with 200-horsepower Yamaha engines with fish finders." He asserted that he also had a "natural heritage" giving him rights to fish those waters with his methods. "My heritage as a frogman," he said, "is DuPont fishing. I would question why I can't DuPont fish," that is tossing a grenade into the water and gathering fish stunned by the explosion. The SEALs referred to it as DuPont fishing, he said, a reference to the company that made the grenades.

In a March 2 letter to the governor, Marge Anderson, chief executive of the Mille Lacs Band of the Chippewa, slammed Ventura's racist remarks. "Although your lack of knowledge on the subject was almost amusing (I don't know any Band members with 200-horsepower Yamaha engines and fish finders, as you claimed), your attitude definitely was not."

"It seems," she continued, "American Indians have joined single mothers and struggling students as the latest targets for your verbal body slam."

While Ventura acts like Indians are a privileged sector of Minnesota's population, the opposite is the case. By many social and economic measures — infant mortality, unemployment, income, and education — they are among the worst off of the state.

## Smeared Irish

Ventura also lobbed a few grenades at the Irish. Following the governors' conference he shot into New York for an appearance on the nationally syndicated David Letterman show where he contended that whoever designed St. Paul's streets "must have been drunk.... I think it was one of those Irish guys. You know what they like to do," he said, pretending to hoist a drink. This glib remark provoked considerable controversy in Minnesota, and many people criticized the governor for smearing the Irish with this timeworn stereotype.

The outrage was sufficient enough that he was forced to issue an "apology," in which he criticized Minnesota residents for their lack of humor.

Meanwhile, the turnout for March 2 party caucuses for St. Paul city council and school board elections showed a dramatic growth for the Reform Party. The Republican turnout remained about the same as two years ago and the Democratic-Farmer Labor Party attendance was considerably lower.

# Vietnamese rightists attack store owner in Orange County, California

BY CRAIG HONTS

WESTMINSTER, California — Since mid-January the Vietnamese community in Orange County, California, has been the scene of sustained, violent demonstrations by rightist protesters over the display of a poster of Ho Chi Minh and a Vietnamese flag in the store of a Vietnamese video store owner, Truong Van Tran.

Southern California has the largest concentration of Vietnamese in the nation — with an estimated 300,000 people.

Tran had decided to display the flag and poster January 17 on the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, and had sent a letter to local Vietnamese newspapers the week before explaining that he would put up the flag and poster of Ho Chi Minh.

The day Tran first displayed the poster and flag around 50 protesters gathered outside his store. The protest turned violent January 18 when Tran was struck on the back of the head as he closed the store for the day because of the picketing. Around 200 demonstrators turned out the following day. The actions have continued almost daily, with the largest estimated at up to 15,000.

Orange County superior court judge Tam Nomoto Schumann issued a preliminary in-

junction January 21 requiring Truong Van Tran to remove the poster of Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese flag from his video store in his Little Saigon neighborhood in Westminster, California.

The lawyer for Tran's landlord had argued the flag and picture violated a provision of his rental agreement prohibiting displays that create a public nuisance. Peter Eliasberg of the American Civil Liberties Union pointed out, "No state official, and that includes the judge, should stop somebody from expressing their right to speak."

A family member who declined to be named for fear of retribution, told the *Los Angeles Times* that Tran, 37, had left Vietnam in 1980 as one of many "boat people" fleeing Vietnam after the war. Since then, he had returned to Vietnam several times to visit relatives. Tran became an advocate of improved relations between the United States and Vietnam, and sided with Dr. Co Pham, head of the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce, in a controversy that erupted several years ago after Pham spoke in favor of restoring business ties with Vietnam.

On February 10 Tran won a court ruling that allows him to continue to hang the Vietnamese flag and the poster of Ho Chi Minh in his store. Outside the courtroom 400 pro-

testers objected to the ruling, and later that day, when Tran tried to reopen his store, he was knocked to the ground in full view of TV cameras and other photographers by rightists who chanted "Let the communist die."

Around 300 protesters marched around the mall where Tran's video store is located February 16 and then rallied directly in front of the store. The front of the store was plastered with anticommunist posters of Ho Chi Minh as a vampire and American flags. In spite of a court injunction against blocking entrance to the store, the crowd was pressed right up against the store, making it nearly impossible for anyone to get into it. There were no police to be seen anywhere near the demonstrators.

Tran's landlord moved to evict Tran in late February. In early March, as the protests continued, police raided the store and confiscated more than 17,000 videotapes they claimed might be counterfeits.

Tran's attorney, Nancy Kaufman, told the press March 8 that the police raid, on top of the protests, are forcing him to give up the store. He may pursue a lawsuit against the protesters, the city of Westminster, and the landlord for violating his First Amendment rights, she said.



# Machinists at Lockheed ratify contract

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

MARIETTA, Georgia — Machinists union members at Lockheed Martin Corp. here ratified a contract at the giant military aircraft plant March 9. The 4,200 members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 709 had rejected an earlier proposal on February 28 by 68 percent.

On March 5 the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMSC) ordered the IAM and Lockheed Martin to resume negotiations canceling a strike scheduled at the defense plants here and in Palmdale, California. The FMCS, a government agency, wrote the union that "a job action by your organization threatens to cause a substantial interruption of commerce."

The new three-year pact was ratified by 59 percent. The union forced the company to shelve some of its worst takeback demands. Lockheed withdrew plans to institute a four-day, 10-hour workweek.

"Unions were started so that workers could get some control over our lives. I'm against the 10-hour day," explained Valerie Wiley, an expeditor with 20 years at Lockheed, at the union hall on the day of the voting. "Besides these companies need to realize, women workers have a second job at home."

Pat Stripling, who walked the picket line with her father during a three-month strike in 1977 and currently works in the plant, told the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, "There's a lot of younger workers that would have day care problems."

The company also withdrew a proposal to reduce 24 job classifications to 9. Many workers interviewed still see job combining and layoffs coming. P.J. Parker, a 34-year veteran at Lockheed, described the wage package of 3 percent a year as "a pittance compared to what we should have had."

"What really gets me is these CEOs skimming off the top, and blaming workers for not being competitive with the rest of the world. If you're going to try to enslave the populace, why don't you just say so," he said. "Another thing, after spending my life making these people 'gillions,' what about my retirement? I only have one life to give."

Under the new contract, workers will receive \$47 for every year of service. "At UPS, they get \$100 per month per year of service — that's more like it," said Parker. Other workers explained that the 3 percent wage increase was offset by increases in deductibles for health care. Allen Jackson, told the *Militant*, "When I first came to Lockheed almost 20 years ago, I contributed 30 cents a week for family medical coverage."

Under the tentative agreement workers will pay \$48 a week. Allen also ridiculed union officials for endorsing both of the company's offers. "It's not leadership," he added.

BY MARK FRIEDMAN  
AND JUAN VILLAGÓMEZ

PALMDALE, California — Members of

the IAM met here March 9 to discuss and vote on Lockheed's contract offer. The offer passed in a very close vote, with 802 in favor and 717 against.

All those rank-and-file members who spoke were opposed to the contract. Union officials all pushed for its adoption.

Workers responded by booing and heckling the negotiators and union officials. "There isn't going to be anything else — you take it or you fight for it. We're only going to get what we have the courage to take," declared one worker, who said he had 29 years in the plant.

"Don't be afraid to go on strike," said another. "I have four kids and I'm not afraid of going out on strike for what is right. We are voting on the same contract again." As in Marietta, workers here also rejected an offer February 28.

Workers were upset with the proposed increase in medical payments for doctor's visits and prescription drugs. Mark Casillas, a five-year employee, told the *Militant*, "We've had no wage increase for 12 years. Labor grade one, which I am in, begins at \$7.15 an hour and increases only 75 cents per year to a maximum of \$12.52."

His friend added that when the Ontario Lockheed plant shut down in 1997 and workers moved, their cost-of-living allowance (COLA) was eliminated and they had no seniority or bidding rights in the new plant.

Greg Hammack opposed the "COLA lump sum not being folded into the base wage. As well, the cost-of-living is not being given to past retirees." He said the combining of job and labor grades had been used to push down workers' wages. "We need to fight to get back the concessions."

*Arlene Rubinstein is a member of the IAM in Atlanta. Mark Friedman is a member of the IAM. Cesar Guerrero and Maithong Tang contributed to this article.*

## RMI Steelworkers build March 28 strike rally



Militant/Tony Lane

About 150 strikers and others picketed USX's corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh March 10. Steelworkers struck Reactive Metals Inc., (RMI) in Niles, Ohio, October 1. Steelworkers carried signs calling USX and RMI "partners in greed." They shouted for USX officials to come down and explain their complicity with RMI in the company's hard-line stance in negotiations. Ray Raschilla, unit chairman of Local 2155-7, explained the strike is stronger today. He added that the March 28 strike support rally "needs to be a big message from steelworkers in the region because if they break this strike, you could be next." Strikers have been getting flyers out to other plants in the area and in local shopping centers, as well as sending a 1,000-piece mailing to steelworkers in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania to encourage other locals to attend. A local radio show, "Big guys in the morning," devotes every show to discussing the strike. "The company's tactics have brought us together," said melt shop worker Bud Maiden. "It's been a long strike, but the longer we're out, the stronger we have become."

## Striking miners at Jeddo reject offer

Continued from front page

that if Pagnotti began mining it, the workers there would be UMWA. But if a contractor came in to mine the coal, the pit could be nonunion. This is unacceptable to the union members.

The miners said that when they retire, they will receive a pension of only \$90 per month — no matter how many years they worked. If they die, their wives will receive nothing. Strikers are looking for a raise in the company contribution to the 401K retirement plan that is tied to the stock market. "That plan was started too late for Billy and me," said Patskan, Sr. "We'll get the \$90." Both have worked at the mine since the early 1960s.

The only improvement workers saw in the new offer was a wage increase of \$1.33 per hour. This would bring the workers up to

the wage scale of the other UMWA locals of anthracite miners. But as Lynch explained, "The real sticking points are in the noneconomic areas."

Lynch stressed the importance of the solidarity the strike has won in the region. "We've gotten money from UNITE, from IBEW, USWA, Carpenters, Masons, UFCW, and more. We want to show workers here that if you hang tight for something you can win. Don't give up."

While these reporters were on the picket line, a 24-car coal train pulled into the struck breaker plant. Miners estimate that this train hauled out the last of the massive coal stockpile the company had built up before the strike, and that with no coal being mined, Jeddo is under pressure to fill its contracts.

The strikers' morale after rejecting the proposed agreement? "Great, real good," exclaimed Joe Lupcho. "We can't go backwards."

*Candace Wagner and Pete Seidman are members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Andy Buchanan contributed to this article.*

BY NANCY COLE

EBERVALE, Pennsylvania — Three members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at USAirways in Philadelphia delivered solidarity to striking Jeddo coal miners here March 3. The form was a message of support signed by 137 airport workers and a collection of \$390.

Unionists at the airport in Philadelphia spent a week collecting the solidarity and received a welcomed response from workers, some of whom had grandfathers or other relatives who worked and died prematurely as coal miners in the once gigantic anthracite region of Pennsylvania.

Joe Kowalick, a cleaner at USAirways, is the first generation in his family not to be coal miners. His father worked in the strip mines near Centralia, Pennsylvania, as a heavy equipment operator, and his grandfather was an underground miner who died of black lung. "My grandfather, Daniel Walsh, was a singer and his records are in the Library of Congress," Kowalick proudly reported. His father worked for Louis Pagnotti, the grandfather of today's president of Jeddo Coal, James Pagnotti. "Louis Pagnotti used

to strip the whole operation and then just forfeit the bond he had put up to guarantee he would fill the land back in, because it was cheaper that way."

The contributions and petitions of support were presented to strikers on the picket line the day before they voted to reject their proposed contract 60-2. Picket captain Bob Lynch took time from the many discussions going on that day among strikers to talk with the airport workers about the history and mechanics of the operation at Jeddo and some of the long-standing issues with the company. One of these is merging the two locals of the stripping and breaker operations and their seniority so that they can in some way cross-utilize the miners.

"That's exactly what's happening with us at USAirways," responded IAM member Wendell Bright. "They would like for us to unload the bags, run up and clean the plane, load the bags, and then push it back from the gate."

The UMWA uses strike contributions to buy food at the South Central Pennsylvania Food Bank outside Harrisburg. Every \$200 gets them one ton of food.

*Nancy Cole is a member of the IAM at the Philadelphia International Airport.*

## Cuban youth to speak at campuses across U.S.

The following press release was issued March 9 by the Committee on Cuban Youth and Education in Los Angeles.

On March 25, two Cuban youth will begin speaking engagements that will take them to universities in the United States. Luis Ernesto Morejón Rodríguez and Itamys Caridad García Villar have been invited here by U.S. professors and educators at campuses in California and in several other cities. They have been informed by U.S. government officials that they will receive visas for their U.S. visit by the end of this week.

Morejón, 23, is a professor at the Foreign Language School of the Enrique José Varona Teacher Training Institute. García, 27, is a doctor of veterinary medicine and she is a graduate from the Higher Institute of Agricultural Sciences of Havana.

The two youth will exchange ideas and experiences with young people in the U.S. from the point of view of youth who live and work in Cuba. They will talk about the effects of the U.S. economic embargo and discuss the advances made by the Cuban people since the 1959 revolution there.

The Committee on Cuban Youth and

Education, which is based at the University of California at Los Angeles, is chaired by professor Peter McLaren. The committee has prepared an itinerary that includes campus meetings in Alabama, Georgia, Iowa, New York and Washington State, as well as California.

Stacy Lee, president of the UCLA Undergraduate Student Association said that "it is critical for students in the U.S. to understand the Cuban situation from the perspective of the Cuban people. Cuba has developed many alternative forms of education, agriculture, and other public systems which this country could definitely learn from."

The two Cubans will be in the U.S. for five weeks. They will visit Atlanta and Birmingham March 25-30; New York April 6-9; Des Moines April 11-13; Los Angeles April 15-21; San Francisco Bay Area April 22-26; and Seattle April 28-30.

For more information contact the Committee on Cuban Youth and Education, c/o Prof. Peter McLaren, P.O. Box 951521, 3022C Moore Hall, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521; Tel: (310) 825-8348; Fax: (310) 206-6293.

**Come to a rally  
in support of  
striking  
Steelworkers at  
RMI Titanium**

**WADDELL PARK  
Niles, Ohio  
March 28  
12:00 Noon**

For more information, call  
USWA Locals 2155 and 2155-7  
at (330) 652-0288.

# Guevara on social aims of the Rebel Army

## 'Agrarian reform was spearhead of combatants' in the Cuban revolution

The following speech was given at a ceremony in Havana Jan. 27, 1959, sponsored by the cultural organization *Nuestro Tiempo* (Our Epoch). Guevara had been asked to speak on the topic "The Social Aims of the Rebel Army." It will be included in a new edition *Pathfinder* is preparing of *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution: Writings and Speeches of Ernesto Che Guevara*. The translation is copyright © 1999 by *Pathfinder Press* and is reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY ERNESTOCHE GUEVARA

Tonight we must invoke the ideas of [José] Martí, as the person introducing me pointed out. And I believe that in speaking of the social aims of the Rebel Army, we are referring concretely to the dream that Martí would have carried out.<sup>1</sup>

As this is a night of remembrance, before getting into the subject and its historic significance, we will briefly summarize what this [July 26] Movement has been in the past and what it is today.

I am unable to begin my remarks from the time of the attack on the Moncada garrison of July 26, 1953.<sup>2</sup> I will limit myself to the period in which I myself participated within the chain of events leading up to the triumph of the revolution this past January 1.

We will therefore begin this history as I did, in Mexico.

It is very important for all of us to know the current thinking of those of us who constitute the Rebel Army. This involves knowing the thinking of the group that embarked on the *Granma* adventure, and the evolution of this thinking within the July 26 Movement.<sup>3</sup> It also involves knowing how this thinking has evolved over various stages of the revolution, until we reach the final lessons of this most recent chapter, the conclusion of the insurrectional part.

I told you that I was introduced to the first members of the July 26 Movement in Mexico. The social aims of those men were very different prior to the *Granma* stage, prior to the first split in the July 26 Move-



Council of State Office of Historical Affairs

Above, Fidel Castro greets more than 50 reinforcements to Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra, March 1957. "The peasants' view toward us began to change, spurred by actions of Batista's repressive forces, who devoted themselves to murdering people and destroying homes and who were utterly hostile toward those who even occasionally had the slightest contact with our Rebel Army. The shift in the peasants' attitude translated into the incorporation of palm-leaf hats into our ranks, as our army of city folk was becoming transformed into an army of peasants." Right, Batista's troops round up peasants in the Sierra Maestra, around 1957.

ment, at a time when it included the entire surviving nucleus of the attack on the Moncada garrison.

I recall a private discussion held in a house in Mexico, where I expressed the need to offer the people of Cuba a revolutionary program. One of the participants in the Moncada assault—who fortunately was to leave the July 26 Movement—answered with a few sentences I will always remember: "The thing is very simple. What we have to do is carry out a coup. Batista made a coup and took power in a day. We need another coup, to take it away from him. Batista has given



Granma

the Americans a hundred concessions. We will give them a hundred and one." The thing was to grab power. I argued with him that the blow we were preparing to strike had to be based on principles, and that it was also important to know what we were going to do once we took power.

Such were the ideas of one member of the July 26 Movement during its first stage. Fortunately for us, as I told you, he and those

there were the eighty-two of us who boarded the *Granma*. The Cuban people know the rest.

### Transformation into army of peasants

What is of interest to me, and what is important, I believe, are the social ideas of the survivors of *Alegría de Pío*.<sup>4</sup> This was the first and only disaster that the armed rebels suffered over the course of the insurrection. About fifteen men, physically and even morally destroyed, were reunited, and we were able to continue on owing solely to the enormous confidence of Fidel Castro at those decisive moments, to his firmness as

## Series will highlight first steps of workers and farmers in power in Cuba

BY MIKE TABER

The speech by Ernesto Che Guevara that begins on this page was given less than a month after the Jan. 1, 1959, victory of the revolutionary struggle that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba. That struggle was led by the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army commanded by Fidel Castro.

This is the third piece in a series that will appear in the *Militant* each month throughout 1999 celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. The series will feature speeches by central leaders of the revolution marking key turning points and major accomplishments as the revolutionary workers and farmers of Cuba pressed ahead in advancing their interests against the capitalists, landlords, and imperialist rulers in the United States. In the process, within little more than half a decade of the insurrectionary victory, a mass communist party had been formed.

Guevara was an Argentine-born revolutionary who joined the July 26 Movement in Mexico in 1955 as the Cuban revolutionaries were preparing to relaunch the insurrectionary struggle against Batista. In the course of Cuba's 1956-58 revolutionary war, Guevara became one of the central commanders of the Rebel Army. His account of these experiences, and how they transformed him and hundreds of thousands of others, is contained in *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary*

War: 1956-58 (Pathfinder, 1996).

One of the revolution's central political leaders, Guevara took on a number of important assignments in the revolutionary government, including president of the National Bank and minister of industry, while continuing his duties as an officer in the armed forces. He frequently represented Cuba internationally, including at the United Nations and in other world forums. He helped bring about the political regroupment that led to the founding of the Communist Party of Cuba in October 1965.

During the revolutionary war, the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement had mobilized Cuba's toilers to bring down the bloody Batista dictatorship, throw off the yoke of Yankee economic and political domination, and initiate radical land reform. Also opposing Batista were substantial bourgeois forces, most of whom did little to bring down the regime but were energetic in seeking to block the Rebel Army's victory.

When it became clear this could not be prevented, these forces — in league with Washington — set their hopes on buying off and corrupting the revolutionary leadership. They confidently expected to engineer the sequence of events often seen elsewhere in Latin America throughout the 20th century: that the July 26 Movement's program would remain only a piece of paper, while in practice the interests of Washington and of Cuba's landlords and capitalists would be secure. Eventually, they anticipated, the situation would "stabilize" enough so that the

bearded rebels could be discarded altogether and more reliable political and military forces reinstated.

They were wrong. From the beginning, Washington and its Cuban bourgeois soul mates underestimated the political caliber, class firmness, and repeated bold initiatives of the leadership forged by the Rebel Army, and the determination of Cuba's workers and farmers to defend their interests.

The first government that came to power in January 1959 was a coalition of the revolutionary forces led by the July 26 Movement and bourgeois opposition figures, among them the new president, Manuel Urrutia. Fidel Castro remained commander-in-chief of the Rebel Army. He had no position in the new government.

The July 26 Movement and Rebel Army forces under Castro's leadership, both inside and outside the government, continued to mobilize the toilers to carry out the program they had fought for. As the revolution deepened, Fidel Castro became prime minister in mid-February. Among the measures decreed by the government in early 1959 and implemented in practice by the Rebel Army at the head of the workers and farmers vanguard were the dismantling of the military and police forces of the Batista regime; the eradication of the extremely profitable U.S.-dominated gambling and

Continued on Page 11

<sup>1</sup> José Martí, a noted poet, writer, speaker, and journalist, founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party in 1892 to fight Spanish rule and oppose U.S. designs on Cuba. In 1895 the party helped initiate a war of independence against Spain, and Martí was killed in battle the same year. His revolutionary anti-imperialist program is part of the political foundation of the Cuban revolution, and he is considered Cuba's national hero. This speech was given on the eve of the 106th anniversary of his birth.

<sup>2</sup> On July 26, 1953, some 160 revolutionaries under the command of Fidel Castro launched an insurrectionary attack on the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba, and a simultaneous attack on the garrison in Bayamo, marking the beginning of the revolutionary armed struggle against the Batista dictatorship. After the attack's failure, Batista's forces massacred more than fifty of the captured revolutionaries. Fidel Castro and twenty-seven others were tried and sentenced to up to fifteen years in prison. They were released in May 1955 after a public defense campaign forced Batista's regime to issue an amnesty.

<sup>3</sup> On November 25, 1956, eighty-two revolutionary fighters, including Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, and Guevara, set sail from Tuxpan, Mexico, toward Cuba aboard the yacht *Granma*, to initiate the revolutionary war against the Batista regime. The expeditionaries landed in southeast Cuba on December 2.

<sup>4</sup> At *Alegría de Pío* the eighty-two *Granma* expeditionaries were taken by surprise by Batista's troops on December 5, 1956, three days after the landing. Half the rebels were killed or captured; a quarter of them were eventually able to make their way to the Sierra Maestra mountains to begin guerrilla operations. See *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, pp. 88-92.





Above, funeral march of 60,000 for Frank País, the central leader of the July 26 Movement in Santiago de Cuba, July 31, 1957. The outpouring in response to his murder by Batista's police "produced the first attempt at a political general strike. The massive character of the response made us realize the necessity of incorporating into the struggle for Cuba's liberation the great social force constituted by the workers." Right, workers with July 26 Movement banner greet the arrival of Fidel Castro's Rebel Army columns in Havana, Jan. 8, 1959.

a revolutionary leader and his unbreakable faith in the people.

We were a group of city people who were thrown into the Sierra Maestra, but were not part of it. We walked from hut to hut and touched nothing that did not belong to us. We did not even eat anything we were unable to pay for, and often went hungry as a result of this principle. The peasants looked with tolerance on our group, but did not join it. This went on for some time. We spent several months wandering through the highest peaks of the Sierra Maestra, making sporadic attacks and returning to higher ground. We traveled from one peak to another, where there was little water and living conditions were extremely difficult.

Little by little the peasants' view toward us began to change, spurred by the actions of Batista's repressive forces, who devoted themselves to murdering people and destroying homes and who were utterly hostile toward those who even occasionally had the slightest contact with our Rebel Army. The shift in the peasants' attitude translated into the incorporation of palm-leaf hats into our ranks,<sup>5</sup> as our army of city folk was becoming transformed into an army of peasants.

As peasants yearning for freedom and social justice joined the armed struggle, the great magic words *agrarian reform* began to mobilize the oppressed masses of Cuba in their struggle for possession of the land. Thus emerged our first pronouncement on a major social issue. Agrarian reform would later become the banner and main slogan of our movement—although we passed through a stage of considerable uneasiness owing to natural concerns related to the policy and conduct of our great neighbor to the north.

At that time the presence of a foreign journalist—preferably from the United States—was more important to us than a military victory. It was more important to have U.S. combatants who would help export our revolutionary propaganda than to recruit to the struggle peasants who were bringing to the revolution their ideals and their faith.<sup>6</sup>

#### General strike in Santiago de Cuba

Around that time in Santiago de Cuba, a very tragic event occurred: the murder of

our compañero Frank País, an event that marked a turning point in the entire structure of the revolutionary movement. Responding to the emotional impact caused by Frank País's death, the people of Santiago de Cuba spontaneously went out into the streets, producing the first attempt at a political general strike. Although leaderless, the strike completely paralyzed Oriente and had similar repercussions in Camagüey and Las Villas.<sup>7</sup>

The dictatorship crushed this movement, which arose without preparation or revolutionary control. The massive character of the response made us realize the necessity of incorporating into the struggle for Cuba's liberation the great social force constituted by the workers. Underground efforts in the workplaces immediately began, to prepare a general strike that would help the Rebel Army to conquer power.

That was the beginning of an insurrectional campaign by underground organizations. Those who gave encouragement to these movements, however, did not really understand the mass struggle or its tactics. The work was conducted in completely mistaken ways: a revolutionary spirit was not created, unity of the combatants was not achieved, and attempts were made to lead the strike from above, without effective roots among the ranks of the strikers.

The victories of the Rebel Army and the difficult and painstaking clandestine efforts stirred the country, creating a state of ferment so great that it provoked the declaration of a general strike on April 9 of last year. That effort failed precisely due to errors of organization, primarily lack of contact between the mass of workers and the leadership, as well as the leadership's mistaken approach.

But the experience was put to good use, and an ideological struggle arose within the July 26 Movement that led to a radical shift in the organization's view of the country's reality and its sectors of action. The July 26 Movement emerged strengthened from the

failed strike. That experience taught its leaders a precious truth, which was—and is—that the revolution did not belong to any one group, but had to be the work of the entire Cuban people. All the energies of our movement's members, both in the cities and in the mountains, were channeled toward this end.

At precisely this time, the Rebel Army began its first steps to provide a theory and doctrine to the revolution, giving tangible proof that the insurrectional movement had grown and therefore attained political maturity. We had passed from the experimental stage to the constructive one, from trial and error to definitive acts.

Immediately we began the work of creating small-scale industries in the Sierra

struggle for the land. Schools were set up, in which improvised teachers went to the most inaccessible parts of this region of Oriente.

There in the Sierra we made the first effort at dividing up the land, with an agrarian law drafted principally by Dr. Humberto Sorí Marín<sup>8</sup> and by Fidel Castro, and in which I had the honor of collaborating. The land was given to the peasants in a revolutionary manner. The large farms belonging to servants of the dictatorship were seized and divided up, and all state lands began to be put in the hands of the region's peasants. The moment had arrived in which we identified ourselves fully as a peasant movement closely linked to the land, and with agrarian reform as our banner.

Later on we reaped the consequences of the failed strike of April 9. Batista's barbaric repression made itself felt at the end of May, provoking a very serious decline in all of our areas of struggle that could have had catastrophic consequences for our cause.

The dictatorship prepared its fiercest offensive. Around May 25 of last year, ten



Bohemia

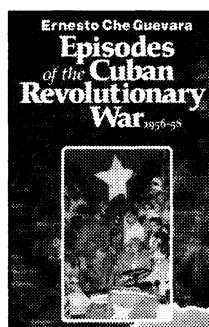
Maestra. A change occurred that our forebears had seen many years ago: we passed from a nomadic life to a settled one; we created centers of production in accordance with our most pressing needs. Thus we founded our shoe factory, our weapons factory, our workshop to rebuild the bombs that the tyranny dropped on us, giving them back to Batista's soldiers in the form of land mines.

#### First act of agrarian reform

The men and women of the Rebel Army never forgot their fundamental mission in the Sierra Maestra or in other areas, which was to improve the conditions of the peasants and to incorporate them into the

thousand well-equipped soldiers attacked our positions, focusing their offensive on Column no. 1, which our commander in chief Fidel Castro led personally. The Rebel Army occupied a very small area, and it's hard to believe that this body of ten thousand soldiers was opposed by only three hundred rifles of freedom, since this was all we had in

<sup>8</sup> Humberto Sorí Marín was a lawyer who joined the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra in 1957. Shortly after the 1959 victory, he went into opposition and joined an armed counter-revolutionary band seeking to topple the revolutionary government. He was captured and executed in 1961.



#### Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58

ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

With clarity and humor, Guevara describes his own political education. He explains how the struggle transformed the men and women of the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro. And how these combatants forged a political leadership capable of guiding millions of workers and peasants to open the socialist revolution in the Americas. \$23.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

#### Fidel Castro's Political Strategy: From Moncada to Victory

By Marta Harnecker

with **History Will Absolve Me** By Fidel Castro

Contains the full text of Castro's reconstruction of his 1953 courtroom speech explaining the political and social goals of the revolution. \$13.95



<sup>5</sup> The palm-leaf hat was a traditional part of the Cuban peasant's dress.

<sup>6</sup> In early 1957 three young men from the United States whose families lived at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo in southeastern Cuba, joined the Rebel Army and served with it briefly. In April 1957, the three were interviewed on film by U.S. journalist Robert Taber. This interview played a prominent role in the United States in popularizing the rebels' cause.

<sup>7</sup> Frank País was the central leader of the July 26 Movement in Santiago de Cuba. He was the main organizer of the Nov. 30, 1956, uprising in Santiago that was planned to coincide with the landing of the *Granma* expedition. In the early months of the revolutionary war he played a key role in sending supplies and reinforcements to the Rebel Army. País was murdered by Batista's police on July 30, 1957. Some sixty thousand Santiago residents attended País's funeral, and a week-long general strike shook Oriente province and much of the island.

the Sierra Maestra at that time. As a result of correct tactical leadership in that campaign, Batista's offensive came to an end on July 30, and the rebels passed from the defensive onto the offensive. We captured over six hundred new weapons, more than double the number of rifles we had when the action began, and we inflicted over a thousand casualties on the enemy, including killed, wounded, deserters, and prisoners.

The Rebel Army emerged from that campaign ready to initiate an offensive on the plains. The character of this offensive was to be tactical and psychological in nature, since our arms were unable to compete in quality—and even less so in quantity—with those of the dictatorship. This was a war in which we always relied on the people, that priceless ally of such extraordinary valor. Our columns were able to continually evade the enemy and situate themselves in the best positions, thanks not only to tactical advantages and the morale of our militiamen, but to a very large extent because of the great assistance of the peasants.

The peasant was the invisible collaborator who did everything that the rebel combatant could not. He supplied us with information, kept watch on the enemy, discovered its weak points, rapidly brought urgent messages, spied on the very ranks of Batista's army. This was not the result of any miracle; it was because we had energetically begun to implement our policy of responding to the peasants' demands. In the face of the bitter attack and circle of hunger that enveloped the Sierra Maestra, ten thousand head of cattle were taken from the landlords of the surrounding region and brought up to the mountains. This move was not intended to supply the Rebel Army alone; the cattle were also distributed among the peasants. For the first time, the *guajiros* [peasants] of the Sierra, in this miserably poor region, had their well-being addressed. For the first time, peasant children drank milk and ate beef. And for the first time too, they received the benefits of education, because the revolution brought schools along with it. In this way the peasants in their entirety came over to our side.

#### Batista's terror, with U.S. bombs

The dictatorship, on the other hand, gave them systematic bombing of homes, expulsion from the land, and death; and not only death from the ground but death from the air, with napalm bombs that the democratic neighbors up north graciously gave Batista to terrorize civilian populations. These bombs weigh five hundred kilos apiece, and when they explode destruction is spread over more than a hundred meters. One napalm bomb dropped on a coffee field means the destruction of that wealth—embodying years of accumulated labor—over an area of a hundred meters, and five or six years are needed to repair what was destroyed in a minute.

During this period we began the march on Las Villas.<sup>9</sup> It is important to point this out not simply because I was a participant in it, but because when we arrived at Las Villas, we encountered a new political and social panorama of the revolution.

With our banner of the July 26 Movement we arrived in Las Villas, where there were others already fighting against the dictatorship: the Revolutionary Directorate, groups of the Second Front of the Escambray, groups of the Popular Socialist Party, and



Contingent of Dominican exiles greets arrival of Fidel Castro and Rebel Army columns in Havana, Jan. 8, 1959. "The revolution is not limited to the Cuban nation, since it has touched the conscience of the Americas and has given a serious wake-up call to the enemies of our peoples. We have therefore issued a clear warning that any attempt at aggression will be repulsed arms in hand. The example of Cuba has created more ferment throughout Latin America and the oppressed countries."

small groupings of the Authentic Organization.<sup>10</sup> It was necessary to conduct an important political effort, and more than ever before we saw that unity is a paramount factor in the revolutionary struggle. The July 26 Movement, with the Rebel Army at its head, had to work for unity among the different elements that were at odds and whose only cohesive force was the Sierra Maestra and its accomplishments. It was necessary first of all to plan out this unity, which could not be achieved among the groups of combatants alone, but also had to involve the organizations in the cities and towns. We had to undertake an extremely important effort to assess all the existing organizations

<sup>9</sup> From the end of August to October 1958, Guevara led a Rebel Army column in a march westward from the Sierra Maestra toward the central province of Las Villas, to expand the war to the entire country. Another Rebel Army column led by Camilo Cienfuegos led a simultaneous march westward. From Las Villas, the two columns played a decisive role in sealing the fate of Batista's regime.

of workers in the province. This was a task carried out in the face of many opponents, even within the ranks of our own movement, who still suffered the disease of sectarianism.

#### Decree ending rent for small farmers

We had just reached Las Villas, and our first act of government—before establishing the first school—was to issue a revolutionary proclamation establishing the agrarian reform.<sup>11</sup> Among other things, it was

ian reform. Although it was not complete, this law had very positive elements in it: state land was divided up, along with that of servants of the dictatorship and those who had acquired property fraudulently, such as land-grabbers who had gobbled up thousands of *caballerías* in borderlands. It granted title to all farmers who worked no more than two *caballerías* and who paid rent. All absolutely free. The principle was very revolutionary. The agrarian reform will benefit more than 200,000 families.<sup>13</sup>

But the agrarian revolution has not been completed with Law no. 3. To do so it is necessary that the constitution incorporate rules against the large landed estates. It is necessary to define precisely the concept of large landed estates, which characterizes the structure of our agriculture and is an indisputable source of the country's backwardness and of all the evils facing the great majority of peasants. These have still not been touched.

It will be the efforts of the organized peasant masses that will impose the law proscribing the system of large landed estates, in the same way as they compelled the Rebel Army to issue the beginnings of an agrarian reform contained in Law no. 3.

There is another aspect that should be taken into account. The constitution specifies that every expropriation of land must be paid for ahead of time in cash.<sup>14</sup> If the agrarian reform is undertaken in accord with this precept, it will likely be rather slow and onerous. What is also necessary is collective action by the peasants who, since the revolution's triumph, have earned the right to freedom. They can use that freedom to democratically demand the abrogation of this provision in order to move forward, backed by law, to a true and broad agrarian reform.

We have begun to put the Rebel Army's social aims into effect; we have an armed democracy. When we plan out the agrarian reform and observe the new revolutionary laws to complement it and make it viable and immediate, we are aiming at social justice. This means the redistribution of land and also the creation of a vast internal market and crop diversification, two cardinal objectives of the revolutionary government that are inseparable and that cannot be postponed since they involve the people's interest.

All economic activities are connected. We must increase the country's industrialization, without overlooking the many problems accompanying such a process. But a policy of encouraging industry demands certain tariff measures to protect nascent industry, as well as an internal market capable of absorbing the new commodities. We cannot increase this market except by giving the great peasant masses broader access to it. Although the *guajiros* have no purchasing power, they do have necessities to meet, things they cannot purchase today.

We are well aware that the ends we are committed to demand an enormous responsibility on our part, and we know that these are not the only goals. We must expect a reaction against us by those who control over 75 percent of our commercial trade and our market. In the face of this danger we must prepare ourselves to apply counter-measures, among them tariffs and an in-

<sup>10</sup> The Revolutionary Directorate was a student revolutionary organization based primarily in Havana. In early 1958 it set up a guerrilla front in Las Villas that eventually agreed to fight under the command of the Rebel Army.

The Second National Front of the Escambray was a guerrilla organization in Las Villas that originally came out of the Revolutionary Directorate, but later broke from it. The organization adopted a generally hostile stance toward the Rebel Army, and its operations had a largely bandit-type character. After the victory of the revolution, most of its leaders joined the counter-revolution.

The Popular Socialist Party (PSP) was the name of the pro-Moscow Communist Party.

The Authentic Organization was the military organization of the Authentic Party, the capitalist party ousted from power in Batista's 1952 coup.

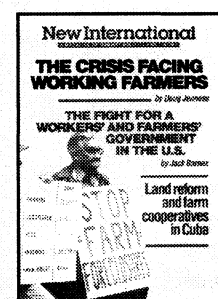
<sup>11</sup> Guevara's Military Order no. 1, decreeing an agrarian reform in the Escambray mountains of Las Villas, can be found in *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* on pages 380–81.

<sup>12</sup> The Batista regime organized general elections for November 3, 1958, in an attempt to provide a legal cover to the dictatorship. The July 26 Movement called for a boycott and organized to obstruct the elections. Amid massive voter abstention, Batista's candidate for president, Andrés Rivero Agüero, was declared elected.

<sup>13</sup> Law no. 3 of the Sierra Maestra was proclaimed by the Rebel Army on October 10, 1958. It granted tenant farmers, squatters, and sharecroppers the ownership of the land they worked, providing its total area was less than two *caballerías* (67 acres; 1 *caballería* = approximately 33 acres, or 13.43 hectares). The law, which was applied throughout Cuba after the January 1 victory, was a precursor to the agrarian reform proclaimed by the revolutionary government on May 17, 1959.

<sup>14</sup> Guevara is referring to the Cuban constitution of 1940, a document that reflected the anti-imperialist sentiment that remained strong among the Cuban people in the years following the 1933 revolutionary upsurge that toppled the U.S.-supported dictatorship of Gerardo Machado. It included language advocating land reform and other democratic measures, but these provisions remained dead letters under the successive pro-imperialist regimes. The 1940 constitution was abrogated entirely when Fulgencio Batista seized power in a 1952 coup. Its restitution was a demand of the July 26 Movement in the fight against Batista.

#### For further reading



#### In New International no. 4

- ❖ The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States by Jack Barnes
- ❖ The Crisis Facing Working Farmers by Doug Jenness
- ❖ Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba, two speeches by Fidel Castro \$9.00

#### The Communist Manifesto

Karl Marx, Frederick Engels

"Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time," write Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the communist movement's founding programmatic document. "The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and that places workers of different localities in contact with one another." Also in Spanish. \$3.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.



crease in the number of our foreign markets. We need to create a Cuban merchant fleet to transport sugar, tobacco, and other commodities, because owning our own fleet will have a very favorable influence on the type of shipments, a factor upon which the progress of underdeveloped countries such as Cuba depends to a large degree.

#### Need to nationalize basic resources

If we are to undertake a program of industrialization, what is most important to achieving it? Raw materials, which the constitution wisely defended and which were given to foreign conglomerates by the Batista dictatorship. We must work to recover our subsoil, our minerals. Another element of industrialization is electricity. This must be taken into account. We are going to make certain that electrical energy is in Cuban hands. We also have to nationalize the Telephone Company, owing to the poor service it gives and the high prices it charges.<sup>15</sup>

What tools do we have to carry out a program such as I have presented? We have the Rebel Army, and this must be our first instrument of struggle, the most positive and most vigorous one. All remnants of the Batista army will be destroyed. Let it be clearly understood that we are not doing so out of vengeance, or solely out of a spirit of justice. Rather, we do so out of necessity, to assure that all these conquests by the people can be achieved in the shortest period of time.

We defeated an army vastly superior in numbers through popular support, through correct tactics, and through revolutionary morale. But now we must confront the reality that our army is not prepared for the new responsibilities it has acquired, such as defending Cuba's territory as a whole. We have to rapidly restructure the Rebel Army, because along the way we built an armed body of peasants and workers, many of them illiterate, uneducated, and without technical training. We must train this army for the great tasks its members have to face, and train them both technically and culturally.

The Rebel Army is the vanguard of the Cuban people, and in referring to its technical and cultural progress we have to know the meaning of these things in a modern sense. We have already symbolically begun its education with a poetry reading conducted almost exclusively in the spirit, and using the teachings, of José Martí.

Taking back the nation involves the destruction of many privileges. We therefore must be prepared to defend the nation from its avowed or disguised enemies.

In this sense the new army has to adapt itself to the new mode of life that has arisen out of this liberation war, since we know that if we are attacked by a small island,<sup>16</sup> it will be with the support of a power that is almost a continent. We would have to withstand on our soil an aggression of immense scale. For this reason, we must get ourselves ready and prepare our advance with a guerrilla spirit and a guerrilla strategy, so that our defenses do not disintegrate at the first onslaught, and maintain their central unity. The entire Cuban people will have to become a guerrilla army, since the Rebel Army is a growing body whose maximum size is limited only by Cuba's population of six million. Every Cuban must learn how to handle a weapon and when to use it in their own defense.

I have described, in broad strokes, the social ideas of the Rebel Army after the victory and its role in driving the government forward to clearly express revolutionary as-

<sup>15</sup> The Cuban Telephone Company was a subsidiary of the U.S.-owned International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. (ITT). Management of the phone company was taken over by the revolutionary government on March 3, 1959, and it was nationalized the following year.

<sup>16</sup> This is a reference to the Dominican Republic, then under the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo. From the first days of the Cuban revolution, the Trujillo regime made open threats against it. In August 1959 Trujillo organized a military expedition that landed at the airport in Trinidad, Las Villas province. The expedition was crushed immediately by Rebel Army forces.



"We have begun to put the Rebel Army's social aims into effect; we have an armed democracy," said Guevara in late January 1959. "When we plan out the agrarian reform and observe the new revolutionary laws to complement it and make it viable and immediate, we are aiming at social justice," including industrialization, literacy, and technical training. Above, work at a farm cooperative in Cuba, early 1960s.

pirations.

To conclude this talk, I would like to speak about one other question of interest: the example of our revolution for Latin America, and the lessons it has taught by destroying all armchair theories. We have demonstrated that a small group of determined persons, supported by the people and not afraid to die if necessary, can wind up defeating a regular, disciplined army, and do so once and for all. That is the fundamental lesson. There is another one that must be learned by our brothers and sisters of Latin America, economi-

cally facing the same agrarian condition as we do—and that is the need to make agrarian revolutions, fighting in the fields and mountains, and from there bringing the revolution to the cities; not trying to do so in the cities without an integral social program.

#### Cuba's example for Latin America

Now, in the face of the experiences we have had, the question is raised of what our future will be, a future intimately linked to all the underdeveloped countries of Latin America. The revolution is not limited to the

Cuban nation, since it has touched the conscience of the Americas and has given a serious wake-up call to the enemies of our peoples. We have therefore issued a clear warning that any attempt at aggression will be repulsed arms in hand.

The example of Cuba has created more ferment throughout Latin America and the oppressed countries. The revolution has put tyrants in Latin America on notice, because they are the enemies of popular regimes the same as the foreign monopolies are. As a small country, we need the support of all the democratic peoples, especially those of Latin America.

We must inform the entire world as to the noble ends of the Cuban revolution, and we must call upon the friendly peoples of this continent, upon the North Americans and upon the Latin Americans. We must create a spiritual union of all our countries, a union that goes beyond mere verbiage and bureaucratic coexistence, and is translated into effective aid to our brothers and sisters, offering them our experience.

Finally, we must open new roads that will help identify the common interests of our underdeveloped countries. We must be prepared to resist all attempts to divide us. To fight against those who try to sow the seed of discord among us, those backed by well-known designs who aspire to take advantage of our political disagreements and stir up prejudices that cannot be allowed to exist in this country.

Today all the people of Cuba are on a struggle footing. We must continue in this manner, united, so that the victory over the dictatorship is not transitory. And so that it becomes the first step in the victory of Latin America.

## Series highlights Cuban revolution

#### Continued from Page 8

prostitution operations; the outlawing of racist discrimination in hiring and social services; and the slashing of rents and prices for other basic goods and services, such as telephone and utility rates, that consume most workers' income.

Most decisively, in May 1959 an agrarian reform law was implemented. Millions of acres of large landed estates held by U.S. and Cuban ruling-class families were confiscated, and hundreds of thousands of peasants received title to the land they worked. To implement the land reform, the new government established the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) and Castro was named INRA's president.

These measures provoked a sharpening class polarization inside Cuba, including within the coalition government. During the summer and fall of 1959, as the land reform advanced, Washington's economic and military hostility escalated. As Cuban workers and peasants responded, they deepened their determination to defend their gains and realize their dreams. Under popular pressure, the representatives of capitalist forces resigned one after the other. These included Urrutia, who was replaced as president by Osvaldo Dorticós, a prominent lawyer with ample credentials as an anti-imperialist and anti-Batista fighter and a member of the July 26 Movement.

The July 26 Movement as well as other groups that participated in the fight against Batista were profoundly affected as procapitalist forces split away. More than a few joined armed counterrevolutionary organizations.

By November 1959, the last of the bourgeois forces had left the government. Washington launched a full-scale political, economic, and military campaign to overthrow the workers and farmers government.

From August to October 1960, in direct response to the escalating U.S. attacks, Cuba's working people mobilized by the millions to support and implement government decrees nationalizing the factories, refineries, mills, and other holdings of U.S.- and Cuban-owned corporations. The domination of capital was broken and the foundations laid for beginning a transition to socialism. In April 1961, the day after U.S.-organized bombing assaults on Cuban airfields and on

the eve of the landing of U.S.-trained and -financed mercenary troops at the Bay of Pigs, the socialist character of the revolution was proclaimed. The invaders at the Bay of Pigs were defeated in 72 hours.

The standoff between the two irreconcilable forces represented by Havana and Washington, which continues to this day, has marked much of world politics throughout the last 40 years.

#### About this series

Most of the speeches that will be included in this series will appear in books that Pathfinder is preparing for publication. These include two volumes of speeches by Fidel Castro from the first decade of the revolution, *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, and a new edition of *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*.

The January 18 *Militant* began this series with the radio address given by Fidel Castro Jan. 1, 1959, denouncing Batista's attempt to turn power over to a military junta and calling for a nationwide general strike. A speech by Ricardo Alarcón, president of

Cuba's National Assembly, on Cuba's first war of independence in 1868-78, the intertwined struggle against slavery, and the forging of the Cuban nation, appeared in the February 1 issue.

The next installment in this series will be "On the Fight against Racism," a speech given by Prime Minister Castro in March 1959 announcing new measures against racist discrimination. Others will take up the first and second agrarian reforms carried out in May 1959 and October 1963, the nationalization of imperialist-owned property in August 1960, the U.S.-organized mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, and the October 1962 "missile crisis."

Some of the speeches planned for this series have never before appeared in English. Others have been out of print for many years. *Militant* readers who are interested in helping with the translation are invited to contact Pathfinder Press at (212) 741-0690. Messages can also be sent electronically to 73321.414@compuserve.com or mailed to Pathfinder at 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

From Pathfinder

Nouvelle Internationale

**L'IMPERIALISME U.S. A PERDU LA GUERRE FROIDE**

Jack Barnes

6

**NOW AVAILABLE IN FRENCH!**

**Nouvelle Internationale no. 6 \$15**

**U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War**  
by Jack Barnes

**The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today**  
by Mary-Alice Waters

**Socialism: A Viable Option**  
by José Ramón Balaguer

**Young Socialists Manifesto**

Available in English in New International no. 11 \$14.00

**COMING SOON IN SPANISH, SWEDISH, AND ICELANDIC**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. Please include \$3 to cover shipping.

# Washington wages war on immigrant rights

**Continued from front page**  
Russell Bergeron.

The 1996 immigration law also mandates the U.S. Border Patrol to bolster its forces by more than 1,000 cops a year, including in 1999. The agency more than doubled in size from 1993 to 1998, rising to nearly 8,000 cops.

The Border Patrol has been outfitted with new hi-tech equipment to aid the assault on immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexican border. The gear includes more than 8,600 seismic sensors buried near border crossing points to detect movement, 185 infrared heat-detecting scopes set up along the border, and low-light television cameras.

The Democratic administration's policies embolden ultrarightists, such as Patrick Buchanan. "I believe we need an immigration 'time out,'" declared Buchanan in his 2000 presidential campaign website. He would "strengthen the Border Patrol, lengthen the 'Buchanan Fence' on the southern frontier, repatriate illegals, and repair the great American melting pot." In his first run for the U.S. presidency in 1992, Buchanan called for building a 200-mile-long fence along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Since the 1996 law was enacted, most arrests by immigration cops were at the southwestern border of the United States. Now many people who have worked in the country for years have been deported — sometimes in less than 12 hours — after being arrested at routine traffic stops, factory raids, airports, and immigration offices while seeking services.

Some immigration raids and firings have been aimed at disrupting union organizing drives and intimidating workers fighting to improve job conditions. Just last month, the INS ordered 13 fruit-packing warehouses in the Yakima, Washington, area to fire all undocumented workers by February 19, in the midst of a fight by apple-packing workers to organize into the Teamsters union.

## More deaths at border crossings

According to the *Washington Post*, the U.S. government's border "strategy" is aimed at forcing undocumented workers crossing the U.S.-Mexican border to travel through rougher terrain, where they risk extended exposure to severe weather conditions.

The Mexican embassy in Washington reported 368 immigrants died crossing the border last year. A recent report by the University of Houston's Center for Immigration Research estimated more than 1,600 people may have died between 1993 and 1997. The study stated that almost 600 of the deaths were drownings in the Rio Grande River.

These deaths are not counted by the U.S. Border Patrol, which ignores those people whose remains are not found or whose bodies were recovered in Mexico.

Among the estimated 5 million immigrants without legal papers living in the United States, many take jobs in fields and factories. More than 40 percent of farm workers in the United States are without documentation and the number is growing, according to a report last December from the University of California.

According to a 1998 report of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, in 1997 the foreign-born population in the United States totaled 25.8 million people or 9.7 percent of the population. Immigrants comprised 9.3 percent of the U.S. labor force in 1995. This layer of the working class also faces widespread discrimination and the worst conditions in housing as well as jobs.

A government-sponsored survey found that Blacks and Latino immigrants live in neighborhoods with the highest rates of tuberculosis and in buildings with the most safety violations. For example, the number of tuberculosis cases per 10,000 residents was 34.99 for Dominicans, 34.37 for U.S.-born Blacks; and 31.66 for Puerto Ricans. The rate for U.S.-born whites was 18.31.

## Immigrants rebel in crowded jails

Thousands of immigrant workers who have not been accused of any crime or have completed prison terms for misdemeanors, like turnstile jumping at subway stations, have been locked up pending deportation. Some 5,000 immigrant children are detained in juvenile jails each year.

Conditions in already overcrowded jails and detention centers have become even more unbearable. Some 93 percent of the beds the INS uses in detention centers nationwide are occupied. In New York and New Jersey, all beds are taken, according to INS official Bergeron.

Miguel Valloy-Nuñez, a Dominican immigrant, died in a New York City immigration jail January 4 of pneumonia and viral infection. He was never permitted to see a doctor despite complaints of chest pain and persistent cough. The next day 33 inmates at the facility refused their breakfast and lunch in protest.

Several actions protesting overcrowded and abysmal prison conditions exploded at INS prisons in New York and New Jersey last year. Ninety-four immigrants went on a hunger strike at the detention center in Elizabeth, New Jersey, last October. Five days later, a group of inmates at the Wackenhut facility in New York went on a hunger strike that lasted nearly two weeks.

In 1995 inmates at the INS jail in Elizabeth

rebelled against beatings and being shackled like animals. Protests leading to the exposure of such treatment has forced government investigations of INS detention facilities, including an investigation of torture by electric shock in a Florida jail.

More than 2,000 people rallied March 7 in New York after drug charges were dropped against Rev. Frank Almonte. A Dominican who has lived in the United States for 23 years with legal papers, Almonte was arrested after customs officials found 300 steroid tablets he had legally purchased in the Dominican Republic to improve the appetite of his 12-year-old son.

One thousand outraged protesters gathered for Almonte's arraignment at the Queens County courthouse, and the demonstration doubled in size at his second court hearing. While the authorities were forced to drop the drug charges under mounting protests, Almonte could still face deportation. Under the 1996 immigration law, the INS can deport someone who admits to acts which "constitute the essential elements" of a crime.

"We must become more active in political struggles that are just, so that what happened to me does not happen to anyone else," declared Almonte, who said he had never participated in demonstrations.

Meanwhile, in another attack on Constitutional rights, Nasser Ahmed has been held in solitary confinement for more than two and half years without being charged with a crime. He served time simply based on government claims that he belongs to an Islamic "terrorist" organization in Egypt. Citing "national security" concerns, the U.S. govern-

ment has presented no evidence, making Ahmed's case one of two dozen cases involving "secret evidence," in which government officials have begun to deport immigrants. On December 4 last year, a new charge was laid on Ahmed: making false statements related to his application for temporary residence status.

"They've been raising national security concerns for almost three years now," Ahmed told the *New York Times* from the Federal Correctional Center in Otisville, New York. "It shows they really have nothing."

"They are throwing around words like 'terrorist,' but they indict him on a document fraud from 10 years ago," declared Ahmed's attorney David Cole, a law professor at Georgetown University.

Ahmed was a legal assistant for Egyptian cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who is serving a life sentence after being railroaded into prison in 1995 on a charge of "conspiracy" to blow up the United Nations, the World Trade Center, and other structures in New York City.

Another calculated measure against democratic rights sandwiched in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility law is a provision that requires the INS to develop an automated system to keep tabs on millions of immigrants entering and leaving the United States.

Ostensibly created to identify immigrants who stay in the country past their visa expiration date, the provision would permit the government agency to maintain computerized records on anyone traveling to and from the country.

## —Special Militant Labor Forums— Protest 'Oscar' to Hollywood Witch-hunter Discuss stakes for working people and youth in opposing 'lifetime achievement' award to director Elia Kazan

### Los Angeles

Friday, March 19  
Speakers: **Nick Castle**, member of Directors Guild and **Joel Britton**, Trade Union Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. 6:00 p.m. Dinner, 7:30 p.m. Program. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$5/Dinner, \$4/Program Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### Seattle

Thursday, March 18  
Speakers to be announced 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$4. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

### San Francisco

Saturday, March 20  
Speakers: **Nick Castle**, member of Directors Guild and **Jim Gotesky**, Socialist Workers Party. 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$5/Dinner, \$4/Program. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

### New York

Friday, March 19  
Speakers to be announced. 7:30 p.m. 58 4th Ave. (corner of Bergen) in Brooklyn, New York. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**The Fight for Kurdish National Rights.** Speakers: Representatives of Kurdish Association; Joanne Kuniansky, Communist League. Fri., March 19. 7 p.m. 176 Redfern St. Donation: \$4. Tel: 02-9690-1533.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**Palestine: There Is No Peace.** Speaker: James Robb, Communist League. Fri., March 19. 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

#### Christchurch

**The Euro — Can It Unite Europe's Imperialist Rivalries?** Speaker: Stuart Needham, Communist League March 19, 7 p.m. 199 High Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: 365-6055.

### CORRECTIONS

The article "Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan announces presidential campaign" in the March 15 *Militant* incorrectly described a placard at a pro-Buchanan rally in Weirton, West Virginia reading "Rubin and Judas two of a kind" as hand-lettered. It was printed.

The article "Socialists form state organization in California" in the March 8 issue misspelled Manuel González's name.

**Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional* and *Ny International*.**

### UNITED STATES

**ALABAMA: Birmingham:** 111 21st St. South Zip 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079. Compuserve: 73712,3561

**CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles:** 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Compuserve: 74642,326 **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255, 285-5323. Compuserve: 75604,556

**FLORIDA: Miami:** 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Compuserve: 103171,1674

**GEORGIA: Atlanta:** 230 Auburn Ave. N.E. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-7976. Compuserve: 104226,1245

**ILLINOIS: Chicago:** 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Zip: 60622. Tel: (773) 342-1780. Compuserve: 104077,511

**IOWA: Des Moines:** 2724 Douglas Ave. Zip: 50310. Tel: (515) 277-4600. Compuserve: 104107,1412

**MASSACHUSETTS: Boston:** Mailing address, P.O. Box 702. Zip: 012124. Tel: (617) 427-6066. Compuserve: 103426,3430

**MICHIGAN: Detroit:** 7414 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Compuserve: 104127,3505 Tel: (313) 875-0100.

**MINNESOTA: St. Paul:** 2490 University Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55114. Tel: (651) 644-6325. Compuserve: 103014,3261

**NEW JERSEY: Newark:** 87A Halsey.

Mailing address: Riverfront Plaza, P.O. Box 200117. Zip: 07102-0302. Tel: (973) 643-3341. Compuserve: 104216,2703

**NEW YORK: New York City:** 59 4th Avenue (corner of Bergen) Brooklyn, NY Zip: 11217. Tel: (718) 399-7257. Compuserve: 102064,2642 ; 167 Charles St., Manhattan, NY. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

**OHIO: Cincinnati:** P.O. Box 19300. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 662-1931. **Cleveland:** 1832 Euclid. Zip: 44115. Tel: (216) 861-6150. Compuserve: 103253,1111

**PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia:** 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8218. Compuserve: 104502,1757 **Pittsburgh:** 1103 E. Carson St. Zip 15203. Tel: (412) 381-9785. Compuserve: 103122,720

**TEXAS: Houston:** 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 380. Zip: 77087. Tel: (713) 847-0704. Compuserve: 102527,2271

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** 1930 18th St. N.W. Suite #3 (Entrance on Florida Ave.) Zip: 20009. Tel: (202) 387-2185. Compuserve: 75407,3345.

**WASHINGTON: Seattle:** 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Compuserve: 74461,2544.

### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** 1st Flr, 176 Redfern St., Redfern NSW 2016. Mailing address: P.O. Box K879, Haymarket Post Office, NSW 1240. Tel: 02-9690-1533. Compuserve: 106450,2216

### BRITAIN

**London:** 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 0171-928-7993. Compuserve: 101515,2702

**Manchester:** Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 0161-839-1766. Compuserve: 106462,327

### CANADA

**Montreal:** 4581 Saint-Denis. Postal code: H2J 2L4. Tel: (514) 284-7369. Compuserve: 104614,2606

**Toronto:** 851 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M3. Tel: (416) 533-4324. Compuserve: 103474,13

**Vancouver:** 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343. Compuserve: 103430,1552

### FRANCE

**Paris:** Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. Compuserve: 73504,442

### ICELAND

**Reykjavik:** Klapparstíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. INTERNET: milpth@mmedia.is

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland:** La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075. Compuserve: 100035,3205

**Christchurch:** 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362



**Ventura 'humor'** — The Irish people have long been the butt of stupid, stereotypical jokes. So, it was no surprise when Jesse Ventura, new right-wing governor of Minne-



Harry Ring

sota, said the city of St. Paul must have been laid out by "drunken Irishmen." Later, he offered a strong apology: "If I offended anyone, I

apologize."

**Adolf was a Pinko?** — The Rev. Wm. Einwechter, of an "extreme" group in the "religious right," favors stoning to death disobedient and rebellious teenagers, according to Associated Press. He also favors the death penalty for a dozen offenses, including adultery, homosexuality, witchcraft, and "spreading false religions." His group wants a "Christian" regime based on "biblical law."

**Please tighten your waist belt** — The airlines have been slicing away at the food they serve,

quality- and quantity-wise. On an increasing number of flights there are no meals. If you're lucky, you may get peanuts or pretzels. The airlines say they've cut their food cost about a third. Imagine what they'd be saving if they had been serving decent food.

**And a bit of hanky-panky?** — A federal audit reveals that the Internal Revenue Service — which demands that taxpayers account for every cent — can't account for billions. The auditors said that of \$222 billion in unpaid taxes, \$119 billion won't be collected, assertedly because the books are in such a mess.

Or could it be "You scratch my back..."?

**The safety fellas** — The Nat'l Highway Traffic Safety Administration waited three months to tell the public that three sports utility vehicles rolled over during routine tests. They needed time to assure the tests had been done right and, also, to solicit the opinions of the makers.

**Remember 'socialist' Sweden?** — "More than 200 severely retarded patients at a Swedish state institution, described by the institution's head as 'lower than any

animal species,' apparently starved to death over a three-year period in the 1940s.... Other investigations challenged Sweden's reputation as a caring society." — *The Independent*, London,

**Certainly not to make more money** — Hertz jacked up its rental fee by \$3 a day and refused to say why.

**Thought for the week** — "Workers' protests over job security will be the main threat to economic stability this year." — Gong Byung-ho, president of the [south] Korean Center for Free Enterprise.

## FBI on trial: SWP case against gov't harassment

From the frame-up trial of Puerto Rican nationalist José Solís now under way in Chicago to locked-out oil workers at Crown Central Petroleum in Texas who faced an FBI investigation of bogus sabotage charges by the company, growing numbers of working people have direct experience with Washington's political police. *FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying* is a valuable tool in understanding the methods and record of the FBI in attempting to victimize the workers movement. The excerpts below are from the introduction by Margaret Jayko, the book's editor. The book, which contains Judge Thomas Griesa's ruling against the FBI in the historic 15-year lawsuit and many related documents, is copyright © 1988 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

BY MARGARET JAYKO

This book is about a historic victory for democratic rights. It contains the federal court decision that codifies the accomplishments of the successful fifteen-year legal battle waged by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) against decades of spying, harassment, and disruption by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The ruling in this case places a valuable new weapon in the hands of all working people fighting to defend their rights and living standards and all those struggling for progressive social change. It can and should be used widely to win broader freedoms for everyone.

The SWP and YSA filed the lawsuit July 18, 1973, in federal court in Manhattan. They charged government agencies with "il-

legal acts of blacklisting, harassment, electronic surveillance, burglary, mail tampering, and terrorism" against the socialist organizations. They demanded a court injunction to halt these illegal activities and that the government be ordered to pay damages.

The trial opened in New York April 2, 1981, and continued for three months. In eight years of pretrial proceedings the plaintiffs had managed to pry hundreds of thousands of pages out of the secret files of the FBI and other government police agencies, substantiating many of the allegations made in the original complaint. Many of these documents were submitted into evidence at the trial.

Five years after the trial, on August 25, 1986, U.S. District Judge Thomas Griesa ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. The judge found the FBI guilty of violations of the constitutional rights of the SWP and YSA and of their members and supporters.

On August 17, 1987, Judge Griesa issued an injunction barring any further government use of the FBI files on the SWP, YSA, and their members and supporters that had been compiled illegally.

On January 14, 1988, the government served notice that it would appeal Judge Griesa's rulings. Two months later, just days before the deadline for submitting its appeal brief, the Justice Department withdrew its appeal. This ended the court case. An unprecedented victory for constitutional rights had been won.

Judge Griesa's decision, reprinted in this book, represents a victory for the basic right to engage in political activity free from government interference.

The FBI investigation of the SWP started, wrote Griesa, "with a series of directives issued by President Roosevelt to J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the FBI. Roosevelt met with Hoover on August 24, 1936, and this meeting was recorded in a memorandum written by Hoover. According to the memorandum, Roosevelt 'was desirous of discussing the question of the subversive activities in the United States, particularly fascism and communism'....

"In 1941 Director Hoover wrote the New York office of the FBI complaining about the lack of information regarding the SWP and requesting that every effort be made 'to obtain from book shops, informants and other sources' whatever written materials existed about the SWP." Ever since then, the SWP was a target of the FBI.

Judge Griesa found that "the FBI's disruption activities, surreptitious entries and use of informants" were "violations of the constitutional rights of the SWP and lacked legislative or regulatory authority."

The court ruling provides a compelling summary of the government's illegal operations against the SWP and YSA as revealed in the case. Judge Griesa dealt extensively with the FBI's use of informers to spy on and seek to disrupt the SWP and YSA.

His decision details several of the fifty-seven disruption operations conducted by the FBI. These include poison-pen letters, malicious articles planted in the press, instances of harassment and victimization, covert attempts to get SWP members fired from their jobs, and efforts to disrupt collaboration between the SWP and Black rights and anti-Vietnam war groups.

It enumerates 20,000 days of wiretaps and 12,000 days of listening "bugs" between 1943 and 1963. It documents 208 FBI burglaries of offices and homes of the SWP and its members, resulting in the theft or photographing of 9,864 private documents.

Judge Griesa concluded that these government operations were illegal and a violation of the Bill of Rights. He ruled that appeals to "national security" — by the president or anyone else — cannot be used as an excuse to violate the Constitution. "The FBI exceeded any reasonable defini-

tion of its mandate and had no discretion to do so," the judge concluded.

Based on these findings, Judge Griesa ordered the government to pay the SWP and YSA \$264,000 in damages.

The decision in this case codifies significant advances for political rights. Important new ground has been conquered in extending the right to privacy of political organizations and individual activists. This, more than any other single issue, was at the heart of the case....

The SWP and YSA case made a political impact because it wasn't limited to a battle in a courtroom — terrain that's not very favorable for working-class organizations. Public exposure of FBI crimes and cover-ups of those crimes and mobilization of a broad united effort in defense of constitutional rights were key to making progress on the legal front in this battle with the FBI. This was a *political* fight with a legal component.

From the day this lawsuit was filed, the SWP and YSA sought to collaborate in this undertaking with all organizations and individuals with a stake in the fight to defend and extend democratic rights. The vehicle for this united-front effort was the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), a nonpartisan organization formed in 1973 to gather the backing and funds to make this lawsuit possible.

PRDF held broad public meetings across the country at every crucial juncture in the case to explain what was going on and to seek support. It organized to get the maximum press coverage for the legal fight and to disseminate as widely as possible the lessons to be learned from the secret files forced to light through the suit. Publishing literature on the case was another big aspect of what PRDF did.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS  
**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 22, 1974

Street demonstrations and student strikes in Spain protested the government's savage execution of Salvador Puig Antich on March 2.

Puig, a 26-year-old Catalan anarchist, was a member of the Iberian Liberation Movement.

Puig had been convicted by a military tribunal on charges of killing a policeman. Appeals to save him from execution came from a wide spectrum of religious, professional, and political groups throughout Spain and from all over the world. The Archbishop of Barcelona approached Franco for clemency. Lawyers held an all-night vigil at the Barcelona bar association on Puig's behalf. And students and workers in Spain and in other European countries held demonstrations demanding his release.

According to the *[New York] Times*, 2,000 people gathered March 10 in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, for a memorial service for the young anarchist.

*[New York Times* reporter Henry] Giniger wrote in a March 6 dispatch, "The main universities in Barcelona and Madrid are virtually paralyzed and heavily patrolled by riot policemen," after students organized demonstrations and a strike to protest the murder of Puig.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

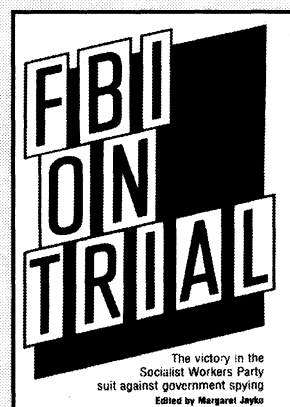
March 21, 1949

TRENTON, N.J. — An unmatched tale of police brutality, stony justice and race hatred surrounds six men who sit today awaiting death in a dreary Trenton cell.

They have no hope, these men. Because they are Negroes. They are charged with a murder they could not, from the evidence, have committed. They were indicted by a Trenton press, which rendered its verdict the day the men were arrested. They were convicted by an all-white jury on the basis of confessions some never remember having seen before....

The story seemed complete. Witnesses had agreed that two men killed William Horner, and the police had arrested six. Witnesses had agreed that the two men were either white or light-skinned Negroes, and these men were dark-skinned. Police had charged that robbery was the motive — yet more than \$1,500 was found in Horner's pockets, and no money was taken from his cash register. A logical suspect was at large, and blood had been found on his cot. And, to top it off, every one of the six men had a perfect alibi. But police wanted a conviction, and at the trial came up with trump cards — confessions! Somehow, police had obtained admissions of guilt from every one of the men, except [Horace] Wilson, who steadfastly refused to sign.

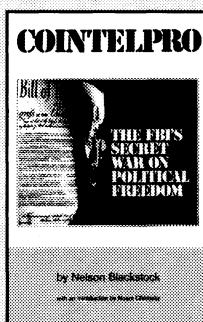
AVAILABLE FROM PATHFINDER



**FBI on Trial**  
**The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying**  
EDITED BY MARGARET JAYKO

The victory in the case fought from 1973 to 1987 "increases the space for politics, expands the de facto use of the Bill of Rights, increases the confidence of working people that you can be political and hold the deepest convictions against the government and it's your right to do so and act upon them." — from the introduction. \$17.95

**Cointelpro:**  
**The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom**  
NELSON BLACKSTOCK  
The FBI's spying and disruption against socialists and activists in the Black and antiwar movements. Includes FBI documents. \$15.95



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690.

# Equal rights for immigrants!

The Clinton administration's assault on the rights of workers who are immigrants is part of the capitalist rulers' preparation for broader class warfare. The record number of deportations and immigration jails overflowing with immigrants who have no judicial recourse run parallel to the soaring incarceration rates across the United States. More working people are being thrown in prison and spend more time incarcerated. New prisons are being completed at a rate of one per week. More men and women are being gunned down by police, from New York to Riverside, California.

Clinton's cold-blooded "welfare reform," throwing millions off the rolls with no jobs or income, is of a piece with this. The logic of this course is the end of Social Security, unemployment benefits, Medicare "as we know them" — the rudimentary social wage that the working class has wrested from the bourgeois class in the battles of past decades. Class-conscious fighters need to explain how these moves tear at the solidarity of the working class, intensifying the dog-eat-dog competition for jobs that the bosses depend on.

In the name of lower crime rates and "civility," the U.S. rulers seek acquiescence from large layers of the middle class and a section of better-off workers for their height-

ened brutality. They target the most vulnerable layers of the population, to pave the road for broader and deeper assaults on the working class as a whole. Their aim is to create a superexploited group of workers who can be worked harder, paid less, and kept more intimidated and isolated from the rest of the workforce.

But the working class is an international class — that's why solidarity and internationalism are the watchwords for working people in defending ourselves against the ever-intensifying attacks by the bosses. The rulers intend for immigrant workers to be blamed by other workers for their troubles and targeted by an increasingly insecure middle class.

Growing numbers of workers face FBI "investigations," U.S. Marshals enforcing picket line injunctions, and other police intervention in their strikes. Farmers are fighting discrimination and foreclosures by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They are in the best position to understand how the inroads against the rights of immigrants today will be aimed at much broader layers of the working class tomorrow. For workers and farmers who are involved in struggle today, it is essential to not only link up with each other but with broader social struggles that advance the interests of the toiling classes as a whole, including to demand equal rights for immigrants.

# Protest antigay killing in Alabama

The following are excerpts of a statement issued by **Ardella Blandford, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor in Birmingham, Alabama.**

I urge all working people and supporters of democratic rights to condemn the brutal murder of Bill Jack Gaither and to demand that his killers be swiftly brought to justice.... Gaither was lynched because he was gay, much as James Byrd, Jr. was lynched by racists in Jasper, Texas....

President William Clinton and other Democratic and Republican politicians are urging us to channel our outrage over Gaither's murder into a lobbying effort to pass more "hate crimes" legislation. They tell us if sexual orientation is added to current laws against "hate crimes," it will be easier to prosecute assailants of gays and lesbians. But why should we have to have special laws to protect someone who is gay? Why can't the government guarantee equal protection under the law *now* to protect working

people who are gay, or Black, or immigrants?

The root of antigay violence is not emotions like hatred. The root is *political*. It is spawned by a system that seeks to scapegoat Blacks, gays, immigrants, women who have abortions, and Jews as the source of the social and economic crisis we face, rather than the capitalist system whose drive for profits demands greater and greater exploitation and brutalization of working people. It is spawned by government attacks on democratic rights, like the recent slaying of West African immigrant Amadou Diallo, cut down by 41 police bullets in New York. Actions such as these embolden rightists like the two men who allegedly admit to murdering Gaither.

What's needed to push back these thugs is more actions in the streets to show that working people will not tolerate their terror — whether it be directed at gays, Blacks, immigrant workers, or doctors performing abortions. That's the strongest way to bring these terrorists to justice.

# Protests against New York cops

Continued from front page

Blacks, such as Alfred Sharpton, have been trying to direct the fire of the protesters against New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani. "Racist Rudy" and "Stop Giuliani" read many of the printed signs at the demonstrations. Sharpton, who ran for New York mayor in the last Democratic Party primaries, is now organizing almost daily sit-ins at police headquarters at One Police Plaza, calling for civil disobedience.

At the same time, polarization has grown. Hundreds of cops have been picketing the offices of the *New Yorker* magazine demanding an apology from its editors for a front-page cartoon published in its March 8 issue. The cartoon showed a uniformed cop at a carnival shooting gallery aiming at three human targets. A sign on the shooting gallery says "41 shots, 10 cents."

"We are not going away until we get an apology," said James Savage, the acting president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, speaking from a flatbed truck during the March 4 cop picket of the *New Yorker* offices. The hundreds of police officers, virtually all white, held printed signs with the names of cops "killed in the line of duty."

Thomas Ognibene, the leader of the Republican minority on the city council, has taken the lead in defending the mayor's course. In a February 25 news conference, Ognibene said, "People were trying to lay the death of Mr. Diallo right at the doorstep of the Mayor, and that is unfair.... [T]here is a great deal more safety in those communities as a result of Rudy Giuliani."

What Ognibene and other capitalist politicians don't talk about, however, is that the supposed drop in "crime rates" has been reached not by changing social conditions but by locking up a record number of U.S. residents. Nearly 1 in 150 people in this country are in jail.

Many demonstrators have pointed to the Diallo killing as a sign of an escalation of police brutality. The March 8 protest, for example, was called by Women for Justice. Parents against Police Brutality also took part. Among them were family members of Anthony Baez, who was killed by a choke hold in 1994 by ex-police officer Francis Livotti, who was convicted and got a seven-and-a-half-year jail term for Baez's death. Still fresh in the minds of many working people is the brutalization of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima in 1997 and the 1996 shooting of Hessey Phelan, an Irish immigrant, by city cops.

Some of the recent protests have focused on new repressive measures by the city administration. These include the March 10 announcement by the police that New York cops will start using hollow-point bullets within a

week. Hollow-tip bullets flatten on impact, causing wider wounds and inflicting more severe internal damage. Other measures include a new policy of seizing cars of people arrested on drunken driving charges.

Anger has also mounted against the use of the cops' "street crime unit," which has become notorious for violations of democratic rights. According to the *New York Times*, the cops on the unit patrol the city at night "in search of crimes about to occur" and its members boast publicly that they "own the night." Kenneth Boss, a member of this unit, was one of the four involved in the Diallo killing and is now under investigation for another shooting.

Meanwhile, city authorities have indicated that a quick decision on whether to indict the cops who killed Diallo is unlikely. A Bronx judge has extended the term of the grand jury hearing evidence on the case until March 29. In the meantime, the federal government has stepped in to defuse the controversy. The federal Civil Rights Commission voted March 5 to investigate the city's police practices.

The liberal big-business press has been campaigning for face-lifts in the NYPD to deal with the crisis. "New York police lags in diversity; overwhelmingly white force despite decade of growth," was the headline of a front-page article in the March 8 *New York Times*, implying that the solution to the rulers' problems is to hire more Black and Latino cops onto the force.

Other liberals call for ridding the police of "bad apples." In the March 1 newsletter of the Commission of Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, Bernice Powell Jackson said, "Any other city, faced by two high profile cases of police brutality like the cases of Abner Louima and Amadou Diallo, would be in high gear... working to actively weed out the 'bad apples.'"

"There are no good and bad cops," said a statement released by the New York Socialist Workers Party March 11. "Giuliani and the Democratic majority of the city council are using the cops and all repressive institutions of the capitalist state as they attempt to cram down the throats of working people accepting cutbacks in welfare, more stringent requirements for access to public shelter for those without a roof over their heads, and real unemployment that is a staggering 50 percent among youth who are Black — all during an upswing in the business cycle. Working people don't need a 'reformed' police department or more Black cops. We need to join the street mobilizations and demand: jail the guilty cops now!"

Mary Ann Schmidt and Ruth Robinett contributed to this article.

# Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

*Street Journal* opinion piece titled, "Autonomy for Kosovo Isn't Worth American Blood."

The next day, Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hasser announced that Congress would vote on a resolution March 11 authorizing the White House to deploy U.S. GIs to "Kosovo as part of a NATO peace-keeping operation." Another resolution against sending troops is being backed by Democratic Rep. Barney Frank and Republican John Kasich.

At a March 10 hearing before the House Committee on International Relations, Henry Kissinger, who was national security adviser to President Richard Nixon, raised doubts about committing U.S. military forces in Kosova. Recalling Washington's defeat in Vietnam, he mused, "Under what circumstances should American military forces be used to pursue national objectives, and what should these objectives be?"

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright has appealed to Congress to hold off debate "at this critical time in our negotiations and in our attempts to secure a settlement." Albright's efforts to ram the "peace" deal down the throats of the Kosovar Albanians and the Yugoslav government ended in a fiasco February 23 when they rejected her browbeating after 17 days of "negotiations" at a conference held in Rambouillet, France.

Pressing for a "settlement," the Clinton administration has sent a string of emissaries to the region, including U.S. ambassador to Macedonia Christopher Hill; former Senator Robert Dole, who traveled to Macedonia to entice ethnic Albanians, who comprise the big majority in Kosova, into signing the most-recent agreement; and Holbrooke. The talks reconvene March 15. The U.S. rulers would like to get at least a section of the forces who call for self-determination for Kosova to approve the plan. "We need acceptance from the Kosovars — clear and unconditional — as soon as possible to allow time to wring a deal out of Belgrade," said an unnamed official in London taking part in a NATO conference.

Since February 17, the big-business press has touted coverage on the supposed willingness of Kosovar Albanians to accept the deal brokered by Washington at Rambouillet, but no one has yet signed the agreement. James Rubin, spokesman for Secretary of State Albright, acknowledged March 7 that Washington had "misjudged" the delegation from Kosova at Rambouillet.

The U.S.-crafted deal is an 83-page document that calls for a NATO "peacekeeping" force of 28,000 troops that would carve up Kosova into zones controlled by Washington, London, Paris, and Bonn. It would allow Kosova limited "self-government," though less than the autonomy scrapped by Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic in 1989. And the plan would mandate the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK) to surrender its weapons over a six-month period.

The UCK is fighting a guerrilla war for Kosova independence. Albanians, who make up 90 percent of the population in that country, have faced severe repression from the Milosevic regime. For months the Clinton administration has used that repression as a pretext for NATO intervention. Some 430 NATO warplanes, including 260 U.S. jets, are poised for military action in the region.

NATO forces, led by Washington, have stationed 8,000 troops in neighboring Macedonia. NATO spokesman Maj. Jen Jonsen told the press March 8 the number of troops is expected to reach 10,000 by the end of the week. Troops from France, Britain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Greece, and Turkey are participating in the occupation force under the pretext of "peacekeeping."

So far, the Milosevic regime has refused to accept a NATO occupation force. According to the *International Herald Tribune*, Holbrooke will insist on NATO troops to oversee the disarmament of the UCK and preserve the status Kosova as part of Yugoslavia, which Albanian Kosovars are opposed to. In order to get NATO troops into Kosova, Holbrooke may also acquiesce to the Serbian regime's demands for dropping words in the "settlement" like "constitution" and "president" in describing self-government because they imply a status of Kosova independence.

This, however, won't sit well with Albanians fighting for self-determination. According to the *New York Times*, a rebel news agency reported a new condition from the UCK, that the Serbian forces should cease all military operations in Kosova before they sign. Pro-independence forces have also said they expect a referendum on independence after the three years of autonomy under Serbia to be stipulated in the "peace" plan.

## Militant Labor Forum

### 'We want our land back!'

### Black farmers speak out

Speakers: **Willie Head**, farmer; founder of South Georgia Vegetable Producers Association, member Federation of Southern Cooperatives; **Carl Parker**, farmer from southwest Georgia; **Eddie Slaughter**, farmer, vice president, Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association.

Saturday, March 20, 7:30 p.m.  
Pathfinder Bookstore, Atlanta  
230 Auburn Avenue

Donation: \$4 For information, call (404) 577-7976



# Mississippi catfish workers call April 9 solidarity actions

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

there will be a fund-raising social. "We want everyone to come to Belzoni to see firsthand how we've been treated and to protest the unfair treatment of workers here," said

equipment out of the Des Moines plant to one being built in Brownsville, Texas, where they plan to pay less than \$7.50 an hour; hired replacement workers; and unilaterally imposed a contract on members of Local 164. The judge ordered Titan to offer reinstatement to strikers who make an unconditional offer to return to work — even if it means discharging replacements. According to the February 17 *Des Moines Register*, John Peno, president of Local 164, said the union has no present plans to end the strike or make an unconditional offer to return to work. In a USWA *Solidarity News* update, Titan USWA Local 303 president Leo Bradley from the Natchez plant, said, "We congratulate our brothers and sisters in Des Moines who have fought so hard and so long to achieve this great victory. We look forward to making a similar announcement in the not-too-distant future."

In a news conference held on February 22 at the Local 164 union hall, Local 164 vice president Pete Putney summarized Titan's 1998 financial statement, which showed its net income fell from more than \$25 million in 1997 to about \$8.2 million in 1998. In an answer to a media question Putney said the union was stronger than ever and had no intention of giving up the fight. Denny Wicker, who helps organize picket duty at the Des Moines plant, said unionists continue to be on the line seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

## Toronto Hydro workers walk out over safety

On February 25 some 1,500 members of Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 1 went on strike at the Toronto Hydro water utility over safety and working conditions. After three months of stalled negotiations, workers voted in a record turnout,



Joann Hogan, vice president of Catfish Workers of America, speaks at March 2 farmers rally in Washington, D.C.

giving a 98 percent strike mandate.

When asked about his wage level as he walked the picket line, Charles McNally, a substation troubleman, replied, "I came within this much of not being here on the picket line. It doesn't matter how much I earn." A workplace explosion had left him burned. Paul Kahnert, an overhead foreman and negotiating committee member, added there have been five fatalities since 1983 at Toronto Hydro. Kahnert said the company negotiators refuse to include safety clauses in the new contract, claiming "it is inappropriate in a collective agreement." They say it's in company policy and in legislation. "But I've seen two of my friends die here," he stated.

The company, formed from a recent merger, is also refusing to clearly codify past gains, such as same-sex benefits and pregnancy and adoption leaves. A noticeable

number of women, both inside and outside workers, walked the lines.

The employer requested the Labour Relations Board impose arbitration and end the strike, as provided by provincial law in cases of workplace amalgamations. An initial attempt was rebuffed March 2.

The picket captain encouraged all strike supporters to come down to the picket lines, as well as to phone in news of Hydro work being effected around the city at (416) 968-2549, extension 28. This allows the union to organize picketing of sites where others are doing their work.

Susan LaMont, a member of USWA Local 2122 in Fairfield, Alabama; Edwin Fruit, a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa; and Nathan Cecchin, a member of the Young Socialists in Toronto, contributed to this column.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

MILESTON, Mississippi — Members of the Catfish Workers of America met March 7 at the Mileston farmers' co-op to map out plans for a day of solidarity actions on April 9. Sixty-eight workers were fired from Freshwater Farms last November for protesting inhuman working conditions and discrimination. The plant, one of many catfish processing plants in the area, is located in the Delta town of Belzoni.

Since they were fired, the catfish workers have been picketing the plant and area supermarkets that carry Freshwater products. They have also been on the front lines of labor solidarity actions around the South, recently traveling to Washington, D.C., to support farmers protesting the loss of their land and government discrimination against Black farmers.

Activities will start at the catfish workers' organizing center at 11:00 a.m. There will then be a march to the plant, a picket line, a program of speakers, and leafleting at a Belzoni supermarket owned by a Freshwater Farms' stockholder that carries their products. After dinner,

Joann Hogan, vice president of the Catfish Workers of America. "We are also protesting because of the state of Mississippi's denial of our unemployment benefits."

The catfish workers plan to invite union fighters, farmers, catfish workers from other plants, civil rights activists, area church members, and others. They are also urging everyone to participate in the April 10 annual African-American Buffalo Fish Festival, also in Belzoni, which will pay tribute to the contributions of Black catfish workers. For more information, contact the Catfish Workers of America at (601) 247-2694.

## Titan boss is dealt blow by striking Steelworkers

DES MOINES, Iowa — Striking Steelworkers at Titan Tire here continue their battle against Maurice Taylor, president and CEO of Titan International. United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164 members have been on strike since May 1, 1998; Local 303 members in Natchez, Mississippi, walked out of a Titan plant there September 15.

Administrative Law Judge Jerry Hermele, of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), ruled February 11 Titan Tire had violated a number of U.S. labor laws.

Hermele found, among other unfair practices, that Titan discontinued insurance coverage for workers who were on sick or family leave when the strike began; threatened to and then did move jobs and

and benefits. The closing of "non-union" Eastern was a victory for all working people.

There has been very little coverage of this important anniversary by the big-business press who don't want to point to the example that the Eastern strikers set. This is especially true today as we see the labor movement coming out of the retreat we have been on since the Eastern strike. More and more workers are deciding to fight the bosses attacks on our rights and living standards and join up with each other to become even more effective.

There have been important strikes at UPS and General Motors. Today there are fights by unionists either locked out or on strike, including at Crown Central Petroleum in Texas, Titan Tire and Catfish workers in Mississippi, Kaiser Aluminum workers in Washington, and others. Black farmers are also setting an example in their fight to keep their land. The American Airlines pilots recently and the Miami Goya workers today are showing that we will use our unions to defend ourselves.

Those of us who gave ourselves to the fight at Eastern welcome the new fightback mood growing among working people and we look forward to being part of the coming battles. Ernie Mailhot  
Rick Walker  
Miami, Florida

## Developments in Ecuador

The wave of strikes against the austerity measures organized by working people in Ecuador, I think it is important to follow up closely. Ecuador is one of the weakest economies in Latin America, al-

though it is the number one exporter of bananas and shrimp in the world and has an important oil industry. Since the administration of Abdala Bucaram up to the present administration of Jamil Mahuad, the government has been facing a great deal of resistance from the toilers in their efforts to implement the economic policies of the International Monetary Fund, policies which only benefit a handful of oligarchs and the imperialists banks that take 41 percent of Ecuador's national budget.

First came the ousting of Bucaram by demonstrations of unprecedented number in recent history. The new government of Jamil Mahuad, has been facing protest actions since October of 1998. The government has tried to sell off to the "private sector." It wants to allow the United States to open a military base. Add to this situation the killing three weeks ago of the head of the Popular Democratic Movement (MPD, a Maoist political party) Jaime Hurtado, a deputy in congress, and two other deputies. Everything points to right-wing death squads.

To every single move of the government there have been protests. The general strike of February 5 paralyzed the country completely. The government has not been able to fire any of the 100,000 teachers on strike, and now there will be a two-day general strike planned for March 10 and 11. I don't know if there is a communist leadership in any of the groups fighting the government, I hope some communists come out of these fights.

Juan Villagómez  
Los Angeles, California

## A translation question...

I just read the *Militant* reprint of Mary-Alice Waters's preface to *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos: la política obrera y los sindicatos* [in the March 1 issue]. As one who is essentially monolingual I thought the serious considerations of political translations was very important.

I have a question, though, about the translation of worker. In the *Militant*, the paragraphs concerning this word appear cheek-by-jowl to the Pathfinder advertisement for the book. This is why I was drawn to the cover of the book where the subtitle is "la política obrera..."

People do indeed judge a book by its cover. It seems to me it creates just that wrong impression on the cover that the retranslation of the body of the text was done to clarify.

If, on the other hand, there's a good reason for the subtitle's use of *obrero*, it would have been helpful to make mention of this in the discussion in the preface on the use of the terms for "workers."

Michael Pennock,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

## ...and editor's reply

In the letter above, Michael Pennock raises a question about the subtitle of the Spanish translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. Why is *política obrera* used for working-class politics, he asks, when the preface to the new second edition points out that *worker* was translated in most cases as *trabajador* instead of *obrero*?

The preface notes that the new edition corrects the translation of *worker*, using *trabajador*, which refers to all wage workers, and employs *obrero* only when referring specifically to industrial workers. "The first Spanish edition had generally used *obrero*, a translation that inadvertently narrowed and distorted the class forces referred to" in the book, Waters pointed out. This is a break from the prevalent tendency in the workers movement in Latin America and Europe especially — a petty-bourgeois prejudice among most of the left — to identify the working class as its organized, better-paid sections rather than the class as a whole.

It is for this reason, in fact, that the Socialist Workers Party, in continuity with the Bolsheviks' class orientation, translates its name as *Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores*.

Unlike the noun "worker," the adjective "working-class" has only one form in Spanish — *obrero*. For example, working class is *clase obrera* and working-class movement is *movimiento obrero*. Thus, working-class politics is *política obrera*.

Martin Koppel

Editor, *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## — LETTERS —

The following letter was sent to the Miami Herald on March 4, 1999. An abridged version was printed in that paper March 7. Both authors were among the rank-and-file Machinists who led the strike at Eastern Airlines in 1989-91.

## Eastern strike anniversary

This week marks the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Airlines strike. The big majority of the members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) who fought this 22-month-long labor battle remain proud of the stand we took against union busting and for decent working conditions and living standards, as are the flight attendants and pilots who joined us in the first nine months of the fight.

Frank Lorenzo was the darling of big business at the time because he had successfully broken the unions at Continental Airlines and slashed wages in half. The members of the IAM decided that we would not let him do this at Eastern. The union ranks reached out to unionists, other strikers, students, and working people everywhere. We explained that the stakes in this fight affected all workers. And in the course of the strike we stood up to Lorenzo, the federal government, the courts, cops, bankruptcy judges, and union officials who had little heart for a long fight.

Our accomplishments included not only "lasting one day longer" than Lorenzo but stopping him and his government backers from creating another major nonunion airline. This made other bosses think twice before attempting to dismantle our unions and cut wages

## FBI fink testifies in trial against Puerto Rico independence fighter

BY PATTIE THOMPSON  
AND JOHN STUDER

CHICAGO — Federal prosecutors finished presenting their case in the frame-up trial of Puerto Rican independence activist José Solís Jordán here March 8. Solís faces four charges in connection with the placing of two bombs outside a military recruitment center. The maximum sentence, if convicted on all 4 counts, is 55 years in prison and \$800,000 in fines.

Between 30 and 70 people attended the trial each day since it opened February 25, with the big majority supporting Solís. In an effort to create an atmosphere of intimidation. Each person entering the courtroom has to pass through a special metal detector staffed by federal deputy marshals, who hand search every bag.

The government's central witness is Rafael Marrero, a paid FBI collaborator. Marrero testified that he built the bombs and placed one at the door of the military recruiting center in Chicago on the night of Dec. 10, 1992. He claims that Solís and two others — Eddie Brooks and Diana Vázquez — conspired with him to carry out these acts.

On the witness stand Marrero itemized \$119,000 he received from the FBI in the last three and a half years. He claimed that in 1992 he was recruited to a "secret cell" whose purpose was to commit violent acts to win the independence of Puerto Rico.

The prosecution presented no material evidence for Marrero's story that the "conspirators" met to plan the bombing, built experimental explosive devices in Solís's kitchen, tested them, drove around together to scope out various potential targets, and carried out together the attempted bombing.

Brooks, who had been named by Marrero, was questioned by the FBI in 1996. In this FBI report he said only he and Marrero had driven around to look at targets. When the state called him to the stand in the trial he changed his story and backed up Marrero's charge involving Solís. Under cross-examination by the defense he was unable to provide dates, or names, or clarify discrepancies in his testimony. He claimed memory lapses.

The only piece of "evidence" presented by the government to link Solís to the attempted bombing is a tape recording made by Marrero when he wore a concealed wire fitted by the FBI to dinner with Solís and his wife in a restaurant in Puerto Rico on Jan. 28, 1997. About 10 minutes, allegedly from that tape, were played in the courtroom. A written "translation" prepared by the prosecution was provided to the jurors.

The voices are mostly unintelligible. What can be heard on the tape is mostly in Spanish, while the jury is English-speaking.

The audible portions consist of a series of vague references that Marrero claims show an attempt to cover their trail following the bombing. Government translator Roberto Mendoza admitted he had checked the translation by working from an English

"transcript" he had been given from an unknown source against the tape. A translation based on an actual Spanish transcript of the tape had not been done, he said, because it would cost too much time and money.

The final piece of evidence submitted was an unsigned document prosecutors repeatedly referred to as a "confession." It is a summary by FBI agent William Matthews of what he claims Solís said the day he was arrested, Nov. 6, 1997. That morning, well over a dozen heavily armed FBI agents surrounded his home in a suburb of San Juan, Puerto Rico. The cops transported him to a U.S. government building where he was interrogated for more than five hours before he was allowed to speak to his lawyer. The cops did not inform Solís of his counsel's presence in the building until two and a half hours after the lawyers' arrival. Matthews testified that during this process he never asked Solís to write down anything, or look at Matthews's supposed summary.

Assessing the prosecution's case, Solís's lawyer, Jed Stone noted, "We got Marrero to say 14 times on the stand that he was a liar."

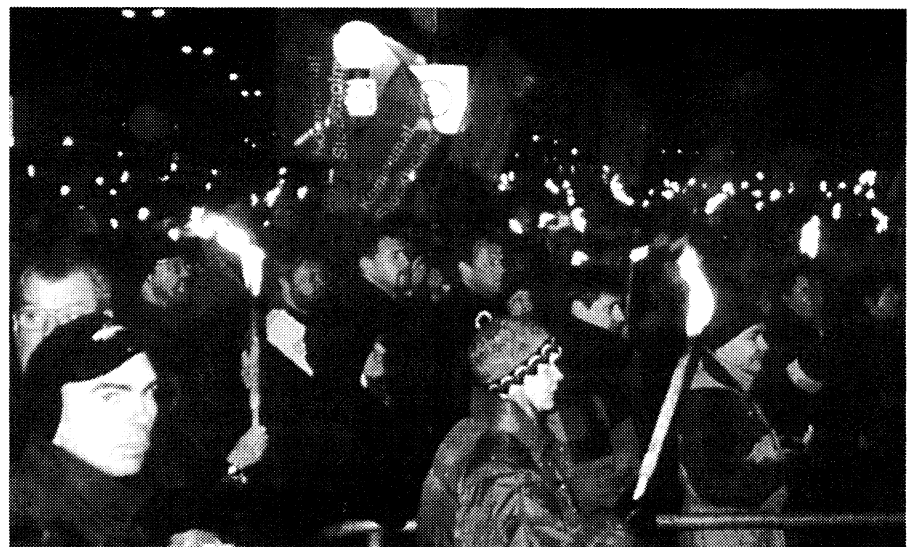
The Casa Cultural at the University of Illinois in Champaign sponsored a meeting for Solís March 6 attended by over 70 people. He was also interviewed by the Latino radio station and the university radio station. Groups of students are now planning to make the several-hour trip up to Chicago to

attend the trial this week, and students, professors and local church organizations have begun fund-raising activities.

Contributions to the Solís defense cam-

paign can be sent to José Solís Jordán Defense Fund, c/o The Law Offices of Jed Stone, 434 W. Ontario, Suite 400 Chicago, IL 60610.

### Sweden: bus drivers win wage increase



Militant/Daniel Ahl

Rally of 4,500 striking bus drivers and others in Stockholm, Sweden, March 8. Some 16,000 bus drivers, members of Municipal Workers Union on strike since February 25, settled March 9. The two-year contract includes wage raises. An upcoming issue will report on the contract and discussions among working people on the strike.

## Report shows UK cop racism, attacks rights

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON — "What I see is that Black people are still dying on the streets and in the back of police vans," said Doreen Lawrence, responding to the findings of an inquiry into the death of her son. Eighteen-year-old Stephen Lawrence was stabbed to death by a racist gang at a bus stop in south London in April 1993, as police looked on.

A determined public campaign of the Lawrence family since that night forced the Labour government in 1997 to concede a public inquiry, headed by retired High Court judge William Macpherson. For months, the inquiry has been a point of heated debate among working people, in Parliament, and the big-business media. The racist nature of the police has been exposed through the report published February 24.

Duwayne Brooks, who was with Lawrence during the attack, concluded, "Racism killed my friend Stephen.... It also allowed the officers investigating the case to treat me like a suspect, not a victim. It also rubbished our chances of convicting those killers of the murder of Stephen Lawrence."

Evidence to the inquiry exposed the facts of this police obstruction and cover up. The police officers called to the scene disbelieved Brooks' evidence that the gang taunted,

"What nigger," before the unprovoked knife attack. They grilled Brooks and the Lawrences, assuming a crime-related fight.

It took five days before police began investigating suspects. At first they claimed a "wall of silence" from the local, largely white neighbors. The inquiry disproved this. Within hours outraged local people supplied names and evidence to the police, who ignored it. They ignored a sighting by their own officers of one suspect removing clothing from his home, covered by a black garbage bag. cursory investigations followed, with no records, reports, or serious effort to pursue evidence of the killing.

The first arrest took place more than two weeks later, after a meeting between the Lawrence parents and visiting South African president Nelson Mandela. However, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) dropped charges on the grounds of insufficient evidence. A private family prosecution three years after the murder also collapsed.

Brooks, already suffering posttraumatic stress disorder, was harassed by the police, who worked to discredit his eyewitness evidence. He was repeatedly stopped under "stop and search" laws, which give a free hand to police to harass anyone they claim is acting suspiciously. Home Office records

show that Blacks are five times more likely to be stopped by the police under this law.

Millions of working people identified with the public campaigning by the Lawrence family. A protest received the support of the Trade Union Congress. In an attempt to head off the pressure, the Metropolitan Police announced an internal review of their investigation. This found that the case had been "competently and sensitively investigated," a claim dismissed by the Macpherson inquiry as "factually incorrect and inadequate." The inquiry revealed Paul Condon, head of the Metropolitan police, accepted the review without question. In 1995, Condon sparked a storm of anger with unsubstantiated claims that most street robberies were carried out by young Black people.

Revelations about the Lawrence murder and police conduct are a blow to the police force. But Macpherson's conclusions are an attempt to limit the damage and rehabilitate the force. The police obstructed the conviction of the racist murderers, yet no steps are proposed to prosecute officers. Following the report, the Labour government fully backed Condon and rejected calls for his sacking.

The Macpherson report upholds stop and search laws and suggests new statutes against "race crimes," including racist language in private homes. It recommends a challenge to the right not to be tried twice for the same offense.

With permission of the Home Office, police hid a video camera in the suspects' home and taped them expressing violently racist views. This was subsequently rejected as inadmissible evidence in court. The widespread outrage at the video's content has been used by pro-cop forces to call for less restraints on such police snooping.

The inquiry proposals center on "race awareness education" in the police and recruitment of more Black cops.

"The institution of the police cannot be reformed," said a statement issued by the Communist League. "More Black officers will not change its nature. The police force exists to uphold law and order for the minority of ruling rich families who profit from capitalism. They treat working people with contempt, as suspects to be kept in our place."

## Hundreds show outrage at killing of gay man

BY CINDY JAQUITH

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — To a church of hundreds of people with standing room only and many more outside, Marge Ragona, pastor of the Covenant Metropolitan Community Church here, welcomed the crowd, "This [turnout] is far beyond our wildest dreams." The memorial was also a protest. Seventeen ministers and community leaders from the region spoke against the slaying of Billy Jack Gaither, who was gay.

Across the street from the church, five members of the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas, picketed the memorial meeting with antigay signs. They had picketed the funeral of Matthew Shephard, a gay student at the University of Wyoming who was beaten to death last October. The right-

ists were vastly outnumbered.

Gaither, 39, lived in Sylacauga, a rural town about 50 miles southeast of Birmingham. He had worked for years loading and unloading trucks at Russell Corp., a national athletic apparel manufacturer with several plants in eastern Alabama. On February 19 Gaither was kidnapped, tortured, and killed. Police have arrested two men, Steven Mullins, 25, and Charles Butler, 21, for the crime. On March 5, the local and national media reported that the two men had confessed to killing Gaither because he was gay.

According to Al Bradley, sheriff's deputy in Coosa County, Alabama, Mullins and Butler told police they planned the killing in advance. They tricked Gaither into going for a ride with them, drove to a reservoir,

beat him with an ax handle, and later set his body on top of a pile of burning tires.

The two men claim Gaither had made an unwanted pass at one of them. Local residents interviewed by the media expressed strong doubt that this was the case. Marian Hammond, who knew both Gaither and Mullins, noted that Mullins frequently wore "provocative T-shirts, with 'White Power' on them and stuff like that." A preliminary hearing for the two is set for March 17.

The Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Birmingham, Ardella Blandford, attended the March 9 service for Gaither and released a statement to the press calling for "more actions in the streets" to push back right-wing violence. (See campaign statement on page 14).